NIAGARA NEWS

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Niagara News is produced by the Journalism — Print students at Niagara College, Welland Campus

Jolly Old Saint Nick sits with a copy of the *Niagara News* checking to see if the students have been naughty or nice.

Photo by Scott Thomson

Virtual Reality Lab at Niagara

By SCOTT ROSTS
Staff Writer

Niagara College's Virtual Reality Lab is one step closer to being reality, after the Ontario Innovation Trust gave Niagara College a $750,000 grant last month.

The funds follow a $797,110 grant given to the college by the Canada Foundation of Innovation in September.

The Ontario Innovation Trust and Canada Foundation of Innovation are set up by the government at provincial and federal levels.

Bonnie Rose, vice-president academic, says the grants are traditionally only open to universities. She says that Niagara is one of the first colleges to receive a grant and that Niagara has probably received one of the largest grants given to a college.

"They are federal and provincial vehicles, partnered together to promote innovation. This is truly an innovation project," says Bob Birrell, manager of research and development for the Centre for Integrated Manufacturing Training and Research at Niagara College's Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Birrell says the project will cost about $3 million, compared to an original $1,992,707. The project's price increased after the grants were received.

Birrell says that contributions from the college, and money contributed "in kind" went towards the project. He explained that "in kind" refers to donations, discounts and software from local companies and the college.

Niagara College's Virtual Reality Lab is scheduled to open in April at the Glendale campus.

Birrell says there is a building already there for the lab, but it "has to be renovated."

Birrell says the Virtual Reality Lab will contain a 12-foot multiple-curved screen, projectors, a "huge" computer with "incredible computing power," and a desk unit to do parts and small simulations. The computer is called an Onyx 3.

"A typical home PC (personal computer) won't do it. It needs a giant computer to handle the data. You need high speed, huge memory and mega-processing."

Birrell says that the Virtual Reality Lab will give students a chance to "experience a design *in real life*."

"It's an experience in real time of a concept or design principle."

Rose says students will have to wait two years to use the facility though. She says the first two years will involve "applied research" and students will only be able to "see and experience" the lab. This was agreed in the college's contract for the two grants.

Initially, Rose says, the lab will be open to industry and partners for special research projects.

She says it will be "run as a business unit" doing research and other projects on a fee-for-service basis.

She says, "the bottom line is always our students."

"I think introducing this technology into our college is going to lead to benefits we can't even anticipate. It's going to lead to major benefits for students in a variety of programs," she says.

"It puts the college in a position to have a tremendous impact on student learning and on the economic community in the area," says Birrell.

Police-training facility nears completion

By AARON YZERMAN
Staff Writer

Construction of the new police training facility at Niagara College's Welland campus is nearing completion.

The $4.9-million Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) — Niagara College — Centre for Policing and Community Safety Studies, which has been under construction since April, will be fully functional by early next year.

The more than 21,000-square-foot facility, beside the college's Mackenzie building, will be used for the NRPS Training Unit and will have all sections running by the end of January 2001.

It will contain a full regime of facilities for police training, including classrooms, video simulation units, scenario-based training units and a use of force and defensive tactics training unit, including a small-arms firing range.

"There are mutual benefits in resourcing program development and interaction that are natural outflows of our locating in Welland," says Inspector Bob Ciupa, project manager for the NRPS. "The NRPS has a long-standing relationship with Niagara College. Locating our training facility on the Welland campus is a natural extension of that relationship. It allows our training to be delivered in alliance with a world class educational facility, and we believe that our presence at the college will contribute to and enrich the educational experience of the college students."

FUTURE ENDEAVOURS

Horticulture students have plenty of work

By PAUL FINELLI
Staff Writer

Winter will soon return, but horticulture students at Niagara College's Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake still have plenty of yard work to do.

Tom Ball can confidently make that claim. Besides being a co-ordinator of the horticultural programs, which are in the Environment, Horticulture and Agribusiness division on campus, he directly oversees the students' physical work on campus grounds as an instructor.

"The opportunity to put in plant material this year, especially with the nice fall we've had, is giving us a lot of landscaping (to do)," Ball said. "We've got quite a few projects now, and we've got them (the students) on the go."

One opportunity came from Carl Palleck and Son Nursery in Virgil, he added, as it donated a "large number of plants" and dead plant material to the horticultural programs. "So it was a real find for us, both as far as the plant material and also for the labs of the students.

"On campus . . . our department, our responsibility is to try and keep the maintenance up and do plantings. And it's part of our classes, our practical labs, and so it's a good opportunity."

When asked the specifics of the nursery's donations, he said, "We haven't catalogued it yet, but there is — I wouldn't even hazard a guess as to the numbers — at least 600 or 700 plants . . . donated under this nursery." Giving it further thought, he added it might be closer to 1,000.

"It is unfortunate," Ball said, that the nursery "has been there for a good number of years" but it's going out of business. "And housing is going in. Well, it's too bad. It's part of some of the best land in this world." With a shrug and a laugh he added, "I guess (that's) progress for you — whatever you call progress."

Some of the exterior projects the students are working on are soiling and planting trees and smaller plants around the campus. This is in addition to the continuous growing, soiling and planting projects inside the campus's 20,000-square-foot greenhouse facility, which functions throughout the year as a state-of-the-art, climate-controlled learning laboratory for horticulture students.

Ball said students in practical horticulture, plant production and greenhouse management classes are growing hanging basket plants as well as mums and assorted tropical plants. He added, those plants are on sale and this month their assorted poinsettias, which began as tiny plants in August, will be in season again for the public.

With the greenhouse's year-round operation, he explained, "people have been very good" in bringing some business and support to the students, who must grow and sell the different kinds of plants themselves.

The three horticultural programs involving students in hands-on training through landscaping and greenhouse labs are Horticultural Technician (Co-op), Landscape Technician (Co-op) and the all-new Greenhouse Technician (Co-op). Each is a two-year program. As the names imply, the latter focuses on interior horticultural skills, whereas Landscape Technician focuses on exterior skills. Horticultural Technician combines skills learned in the other two. In the first year of all three programs, students share their Term 1 and take many of the same courses in Term 2.

The greenhouse's regular business hours during the school year are weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Potting mixed tropical plants inside the Glendale greenhouse, as part of their horticulture course, are from left, first-year horticulture students Joy Beckett, 26, of Scotland, Ont., Christina Campbell, 26, of Port Colborne, Mike Ditta, 25, of Toronto, and Awique Carriere, 19, of Alexandria, Ont.

Photo by Paul Finelli

Welland campus cafeteria delayed by rising costs

By LAURA T. RICCIUTO
Staff Writer

Welland campus students in search of a hot meal at the cafeteria will have to trek through the snow another season, as plans for the new $2.9-million cafeteria have been cancelled until a future phase of the Master Plan.

Niagara College President Dan Patterson says the cancellation was attributed to "escalating costs, skill shortage and lack of constructors."

The tender costs for the cafeteria came in overbudget at $3.6 million and rising, explained Patterson.

Niagara College's Welland campus is the only campus that does not have a cafeteria in the main building. Both the Maid of the Mist Centre in Niagara Falls and Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake have sit-down eating facilities.

Students on the Welland campus agree that it's not fair they don't have a cafeteria in the main building and having a cafeteria in a closer building would be a benefit. The cafeteria is in the Black Walnut building. Patrons must walk outdoors in all seasons, something physically challenged students and faculty find difficult in winter.

Students who choose to remain in the main building have to eat food holding it over their laps or as they sit on the floor and benches in the hallways.

"If I don't want to eat Aramark's food, I go hungry. Then I can't concentrate for class," comments first-year General Arts and Science student Steevie Mussell.

The 20-year-old St. Catharines resident, who at the time was eating her lunch seated on the floor in a corner of the foyer, says she thinks it "sucks" that students at the other two campuses have tables at which to eat their lunches.

Patterson says the college's goal is to improve services, and he recognizes that the Welland campus cafeteria has "fallen short of what (students) want.

"Welland campus has a cafeteria, but it needs improvements," says the college president.

Patterson says this is common for all colleges that have multi-building campuses.

The plans for the multi-million-dollar cafeteria expansion have been shifted to Phase Two of the Master Plan.

Patterson says they will be working on trying to find alternatives to the original plan. He says it is "too early" to discuss what those other avenues might encompass, but the college is focusing on January to develop a "cost-effective alternative."

Patterson says the funding distribution to the three campuses is a "question of balance." Although, he says, he never received the impression from students that there was an "imbalance," he continues to say every campus has its strengths.

He explains that Niagara's Welland campus is not being overlooked and it has received more than $18 million in investments over the past three to five years.

With the assistance of Christopher Blake, of the Niagara College Foundation, the college president lists the improvements made.

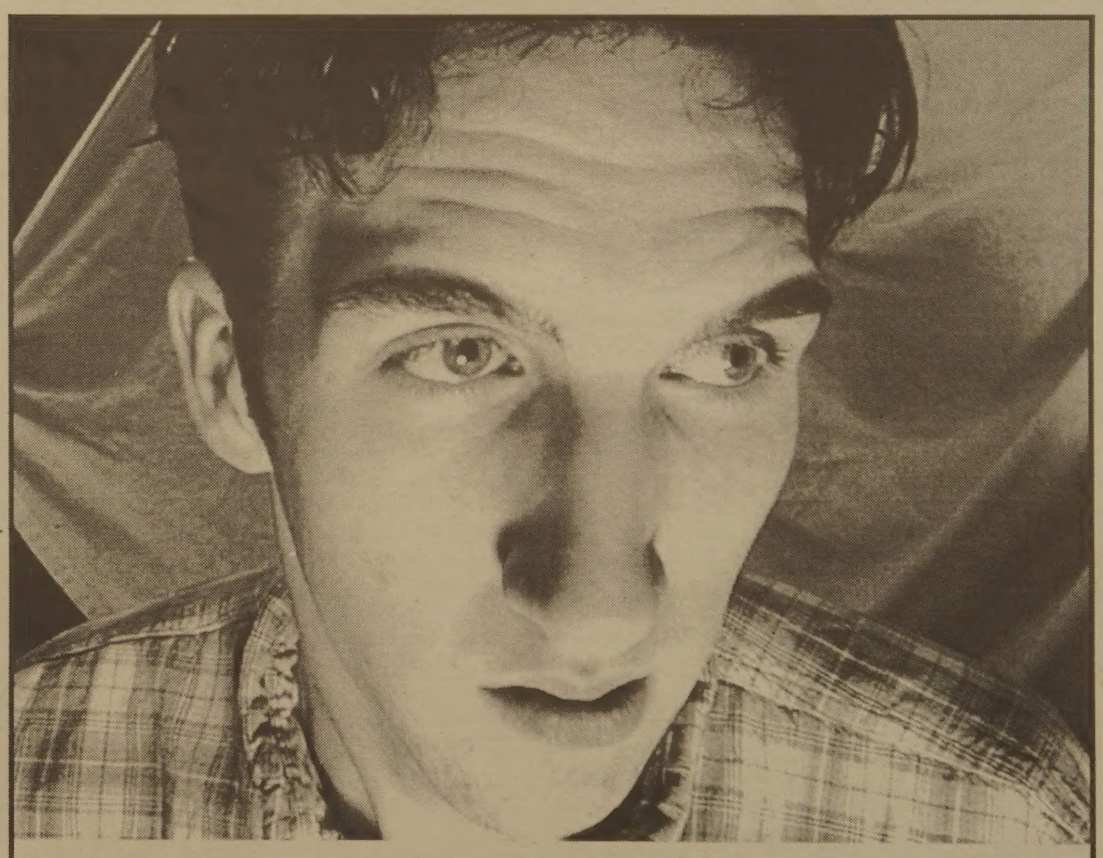
These include child care and police facilities, Skill Centre, fibre-optics, renovations to classrooms as well as the Hamilton Room and the new gym floor.

"I want to stress that this is not a Niagara College problem alone. It is happening college-wide," says Patterson as he explains other colleges across Ontario were forced to delay their cafeteria building plans as well.

He says that the real concern they are facing is to make sure there is not a lack of food for students.

Patterson assures students Niagara is working with Aramark so there will be a variety of foods available in the main building as well as minimal line delays.

"We are working on alternative plans to deal with this issue."



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WORKPLACE OF THE FUTURE

Partnering in $1.8-billion educational expansion

By CALUM McNEIL
Staff Writer

The provincial government will partner with the private sector to spend $1.8 billion expanding colleges and universities.

The expenditure represents the largest provincial capital investment in post-secondary education in 30 years. The investment will create 73,000 new student spaces in the institutions and is part of the government's plan to modernize post-secondary education.

This will see the investment of $35 million annually in tuition scholarships to high school students with top marks. A standard of a four-year baccalaureate degree in nursing has been established to improve the quality of health care, and the province will cap tuition increases at two per cent through the next five years.

The phase of the plan still to be implemented, called Bill 132 or The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Statute Law Amendment Act, 2000, will see further changes to post-secondary education in Ontario.

The province has given the minister the right to give consent to new degree-granting institutions. In addition, the minister is able to give consent to colleges of applied arts and technology to grant baccalaureate degrees in applied areas of study.

College President Dan Patterson at work.

Photo by Calum McNeil

Niagara College President Dan Patterson says the bill will be phased in slowly. He says there will be 24 areas of specialization during the next three years.

"I am in favour of Bill 132. The Board of Governors and I have met and we are in support of applied degrees."

On the establishment of private post-secondary institutions in Ontario, the president says, "There are 17 universities in Ontario.

> *'I am in favour of Bill 132. The Board of Governors and I have met and we are in support of applied degrees.'*

While they are not opposing Bill 132, they are concerned that the introduction of private universities would undermine public institutions by taking students away from them."

Patterson says no public funds will be used to establish the private universities. However, students applying to them will be eligible for the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP).

"The government position is that by introducing private universities, citizens of Ontario will have more choices and learning opportunities than currently exist. Niagara College has worked with a number of private institutions and supports more choices for students," says Patterson.

The applied degree, he says, will not undermine the current college diploma credential. He says the diplomas are "respected" by employers, but increasingly employers are requesting degrees.

Bill 132 will create new provincial offences for OSAP abuse with maximum fines of $25,000 for individuals and $100,000 for corporations.

Only Niagara offers fabrication technology training

By DAN D'AMICO
Staff Writer

Niagara College is the only Ontario college with fabrication technology training. Eight students will acquire skills no one in North America has through the Microelectronics Manufacturing (Post-graduate) program.

Leo Tiberi, director of the Communications and Information Technology Division, said, "We have a unique set of courses that will equip our graduates to succeed in the growing field of microelectronics manufacturing."

"It's an exciting time for students and graduates because they are in high demand," he said. "We hope they apply these skills to succeed."

Tiberi said the college works closely with companies such as Nortel, Gennum, Dalsa and Luxel.

Companies that have manufacturing capability place "a great value to the college," he said.

The training facility, in the Voyageur building of the Welland campus, cost about $400,000 to build. All the equipment has been donated by private industry. "We're grateful for that," Tiberi said.

Student tuition and government grants cover the cost of operating the facility.

This is part of an ongoing series focusing on cutting-edge programs offered at Niagara College.

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NIAGARA COLLEGE CANADA

IN THE COMMUNITY

Welland hospital unveils new dental clinic

By JOËL D. HERRINGTON
Staff Writer

Those responsible for the partnership between Welland County General Hospital and Niagara College's Dental Hygiene and Assistant programs held a grand opening ceremony for a new dental clinic on Nov. 20. The celebration took place in the hospital's Woolcott Wing where the facility was unveiled.

Within this clinic, students in their final term of the programs will have the opportunity to work with elderly patients from the hospital's Extended Care Unit and Complex Continuing Care department.

Hosting the event was Suzanne Payeur-Grenier, who says the clinic aims to help restore and prevent dental problems with the elderly. This type of service stands "outside" of regular dental offices, says Payeur-Grenier. Most of these patients are unable to visit off-site dentists because of their age or physical condition.

The clinic's main financial supporters are Dr. Ken Crossman and RBC Dominion Securities. The furnishings consist of two operating chairs and an electronic lift for disabled patients.

"The lift will be a tremendous advantage," says Dr. Peter McDermott, chief of dental services at the hospital. "We might be the only clinic in Ontario that has a lift."

To assist the nurses, the lift holds a sling that straps around the patient and transports him or her onto the operating chair.

Dr. McDermott was the first to bring forward the idea and start the project, says Cheryl White. In regard to all those involved with the development of the clinic, White says, "It was a great effort." White is the administrator for the Port Colborne and Welland hospitals.

The students working at this clinic will have a chance to deal with patients' special needs. This allows students to work with other aspects of dentistry, says Kathleen Adams, co-ordinator of the dental hygiene and assistant programs. Serious gum and teeth problems are not common among the younger patients from the college's clinic.

> ***'It (the clinic) gives our students the opportunity to be much more well-rounded individuals.' — Kathleen Adams***

With the elderly, the students will practice on problems that are more serious. "It's going to make them work on their feet," says Adams. "It (the clinic) gives our students the opportunity to be much more well-rounded individuals."

The hospital clinic's main supervisor is Dr. McDermott. While eight of 12 students work on patients, four others patrol the hallways making assessments. Nurse Josee Asselin, a graduate of the college's dental program, decides which patients the students can work with, says Adams. Concerning the room itself, Adams says, "It's absolutely marvelous."

Marjory Adkin-Wilson, communication co-ordinator for the Welland hospital site, says there are about 150 possible patients from the Complex Continuing Care department and the Extended Care Unit.

The services will begin "immediately" and should be "really helpful" for these patients, says Adkin-Wilson.

Mary Parker, Niagara Health System's vice-president of health programs, says dentistry does not often supply services for the elderly, adding the clinic is a "good chance" for the students to learn how to treat them. On a regional level, Parker says, "Welland will be the key piece" for encouraging other hospitals to create similar services. The Niagara Health System was "very" pleased with the development of the clinic, says Parker.

During his speech at the ceremony, McDermott says, "This has been, on the hospital side, a tremendous effort," adding, "Everybody was very enthusiastic in making this possible."

Initially, the services are being offered on Fridays only.

On Nov. 20, the Welland County General Hospital held a floss-cutting ceremony for the grand opening of its new dental clinic. The clinic is teaming with the college's students in the Dental Hygiene and Dental Assistant programs, who will be suppling the services. Pictured from left are Dr. Ted Henderson, clinic supervisor, Suzanne Payeur-Grenier, host of the grand opening, Kathleen Adams, co-ordinator of dental hygiene and assistant programs, Dr. Peter McDermott, the hospital's chief of dentistry, and nurse Josee Asselin.

Photo by Joël D. Herrington

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The 'Leave the Pack Behind' name for this program has been adopted, with permission, from the World Health Organization's 1999 World No Tobacco day campaign.

Created by: Catherine Leblanc & Erika Steibelt, Queen's University

Labour council member newest board governor

By LAURA T. RICCIUTO
Staff Writer

Niagara College's Board of Governors has introduced a new face to its membership.

Mohammad Nazir, of St. Catharines, became a board member on Oct. 19.

He attended his first official board meeting on Nov. 16 at Hennepin Hall, on Niagara College's Welland campus.

Nazir's first impression of the board meeting was this: "It was great. Excellent."

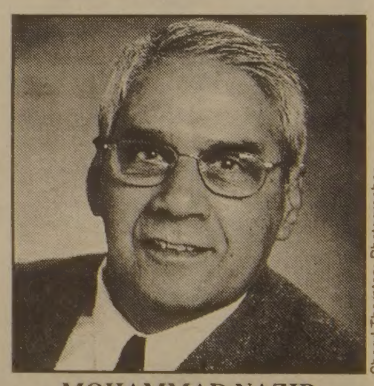
Looking at his watch, he then commented, "I thought it would have taken longer."

November's Board of Governors meeting, which opened to the public at 6 p.m., adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Following the session, Niagara College President Dan Patterson welcomed Nazir to the board. "You've jumped right into the middle of it," chuckled the president.

Nazir, who is retired, had been employed with the General Motors Corporation in St. Catharines from 1981 until 2000. Prior to that he worked at Samco Brass in St. Catharines, for eight years.

The new Niagara College governor is an executive board member of St. Catharines and District Labour Council and chairperson of its Human Rights Committee.



Sheryl Thornton: Photographer

MOHAMMAD NAZIR

In a Niagara College press release, it states because Naz ir is "deeply committed to his own continuing education and training at Niagara College, Mr. Nazir will be a strong spokesman for adult learners and for training systems that respond innovatively to the requirements of regional workers."

"Nazir has been involved in various advocacy organizations, known to address peace, social development and human rights issues in our society."

His résumé, submitted to the board, states he is a member of the United Way panel and Canadian Peace Alliance and has a history of other community contributions.

TOURIN' AROUND

Fort Erie gave students run of the town for a day

By HEIDI MORRISON
Staff Writer

He gave students a drawing board with no restrictions.

That is what Gary Bruno says he wanted to give Niagara College students in the Tourism Development (Post-graduate) program as their project. Their goal? To determine potential tourism magnets.

Bruno, general manager of the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) of Greater Fort Erie, gave the students the run of the town, after providing background data. He says this is something entrepreneurs are "currently" working on and the project says to the students, "Where would you take it?"

"Using Niagara College students gives us the opportunity to have people not intimate with the area. It gives a fresh face on the subject."

Bruno says now the EDC can see if the students' research reaches the same conclusions as the professionals.

"The students also represent the consumer."

Some recommendations students have made are creating more of an attraction in Fort Erie's archaeological assets, rejuvenation of the waterfront areas and the addition of a live theatre.

Asked how the students did compared with professional consultants, Bruno says, "I think they certainly have re-enforced what the professionals have said. It's interesting that they substantiated effectively what consultants have said in the past, but they have brought new things to light as well."

Bruno says he liked how the students put an effort into many of the areas as "a ribbon of events, joining them together as a package."

He says he hopes students will learn from this experience, and that it shows them the importance of not always going to the government for financial help.

"From the get-go, it's easy to say, 'we'll just get government funding.'"

The EDC will be more involved with Niagara College in the future, says Bruno.

"It's a great opportunity for students to learn. It's a win-win situation."

College creates affiliation with South American university

By PAUL FINELLI
Staff Writer

Ecuador is on many students' minds in Niagara College's Ecosystem Restoration (Post-graduate) program, thanks to the college's new affiliation with a university in that South American country.

A three-way partnership has been finalized between Niagara College, College of the Rockies in British Columbia and the Universidad Espiritu Santo in Guayaquil, Ecuador (UESS). All will work to develop sustainable, community-based eco-tourism in coastal Ecuador. The program is offered at Niagara College's Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Each June for the next three years, three graduates will go to Ecuador and spend three months collecting baseline data and initiating ecology- and tourism-based community projects.

Jos Nolle, director of International Education and Development at the Welland campus, said he is happy about the new affiliation between Niagara College and a South American university.

File photo

"We have funding (now) to finance certain work," said Jos Nolle, director of International Education and Development at the Welland campus, his eyes twinkling. The partnership began two years ago, at first with the B.C. school, which is "really into the eco-tourism" there, before it grew into the college's present involvement, Nolle said, adding his department received news "about a month ago" they were receiving their federal funding. "A whole action plan (is) implemented."

The grant of $350,000 by the federal arm, Canadian International Development Agency, will be distributed over four years through the Canadian Community of Colleges, an intermediary between the government and the college that brings its own $6 million to the endeavour.

Niagara doesn't directly fund the project but encourages and supports the work through its staff, technological equipment and other resources, all of which Ecuador could use, Nolle said.

The project's overall goal is to work collaboratively with UEES and their community partners to strengthen their ability in three important ways:

- to initiate ecosystem research and restoration projects in coastal Ecuador,
- to provide human resource development opportunities in the eco-tourism sector, and
- to support and establish revenue-generating enterprises that contribute to sustainable eco-tourism.

"What we hope is that the work in progress will attract a certain type of tourist," he said of the tourism projects, which tap into Ecuador's exotic natural environment. He conceded the desired tourist is wealthy people who are "very concerned about the world" and "want to experience something" they would tell other people about as well. "These visitors would come to pay good money to stay and eat (in Ecuador)."

He noted the reason for the college's active role. "We have to help people there become a little more sophisticated."

While Niagara College will focus on its specialty ecosystem restoration, College of the Rockies will focus on its eco-tourism specialty along with small business development.

Since the Guayaquil region of coastal Ecuador suffers widespread poverty, significant environmental degradation and a general lack of tourism-related development, the project will take a multi-disciplinary approach to addressing the problems there. A combination of ecology, tourism and entrepreneurial development will be incorporated in the partnership's efforts.

Adrian Howard, a graduate from the program last year, will soon be finishing working the last six months in the region. The selected applicants will get field training in May.

Selection criteria will be based on academic achievement and include an enthusiasm and commitment for the field they are studying., as well as the work they would be doing in Ecuador.

"They will have a lot of energy," he said about the ideal candidates. "It's not for everybody." Another criteria, he added, is "Will they enjoy the experience?" There is one other important consideration: "They will be representing Canada, Niagara (College) and our (Ecosystem) program."

He acknowledged the current sense is that 10 to 15 students have expressed a definite interest in the excursion. Those selected will already have a university degree and then a post-graduate certificate from the program. As well, he added, with much enthusiasm, "It's a good opportunity for them to add (experience) to their résumé, right?"

He said successful implementation of the project activities will bring in positive economic and social changes along Ecuador's coast, give individual learning opportunities for Canadians and Ecuadorians, and maintain the region's unique biological character and carefully manage the nature tourism.

Besides the emphasis on ecology and restoration, the projects are expected to help foster the importance of environmental sustainability in Canada and Ecuador.

The brains behind the Winter Festival of Lights, Brian Merrett, chairman of the Niagara Parks Commission, (left), George Hostick, chairman of the Winter Festival of Lights, Alison Grier, marketing manager of Walt Disney Canada Limited, and Wayne Thomson, mayor of Niagara Falls, at a media conference at the Sheraton Fallsview Hotel and Conference Centre. The festival ends on Jan. 16, 2001.

Photo by Scott Rosts

SAC

Students walk away from pub with extra cash

By BILL STEPHENSON
Staff Writer

On Nov. 15 some students walked away from the After Hours pub with more money than when they entered.

Who Wants To Be A Hundredaire? was a mock game of the popular TV game show Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? The Student Administrative Council (SAC) put on the event that ended up giving away a total of $220.17. Students signed up for the event, yet five played in circumstance of random draw.

The questions were aimed at examining the knowledge students have about their college, community, and basic trivia. Questions were worth $5, $10, $20, $30, $50, and the final question $100. Students could stop and keep the money at any time during the game. Once students reached $10 or $30 they were promised the amount.

The game included two "lifelines" which were 50/50 and ask the audience. Participants faced away from the audience. SAC shirts were given to all who signed up.

The first participant was Natalie Krajinovic, 20, of the Police Foundations program. She made it to the $100 question, yet was incorrect and had to settle with $30. "I was nervous. I should have stayed with the $50."

Mike Napper, 19, of the Electronic Engineering program also made it to the final question, but was incorrect. The question was What year did Big Bucks, in St. Catharines, open? He chose 1991, but the correct answer was 1996. Sorry, Mike. He smiled as he left the stage with $30 saying he plans to spend it on beer.

Next was Sarah Chisholm, 18, of the Child and Youth Care Worker program. She won $30 and says she wants to spend it on Christmas presents for her friends.

Carmen Raniero, 26, made it to $50, but was incorrect when he trusted the audience. A student of the Computer Engineering program, Raniero won $30 and says, "I'm going to treat my Information Services department friends to lunch."

The big winner, and only $100 winner, was Shawn Cunningham, 19, of the Police Foundations program. "I might get some speakers for my car," he says after the victory.

Jeff Dutcher, 21, SAC vice-president of public relations, and Jason Boccinfuso, 19, the vice-president of campus affairs, hosted the event.

"I hope people had fun," says Dutcher. "It's a chance to meet a whole bunch of new people, and I think that's what college is about."

Dutcher says it upsets him to see people who don't care about SAC and the activities they put forward. "We're representing you guys. Why wouldn't you care about something that's for you? Students pay money . . . we're trying to get out there and give it back to them," says Dutcher seriously.

"This is for them."

There's always room for improvement when it comes to SAC

By HEATHER RUTA
Staff writer

Students who said they don't know what the Student Administrative Council (SAC) does at Niagara College hit the Welland campus student council hard. A recent survey by *Niagara News* found many students felt SAC needed to increase communication and create a higher profile. Asked how he felt about the students' responses, Ryan McLaughlin, president, said, "I am not overly surprised at the response. I think out of the 5,000 students there is always going to be some that don't know what's going on at the school.

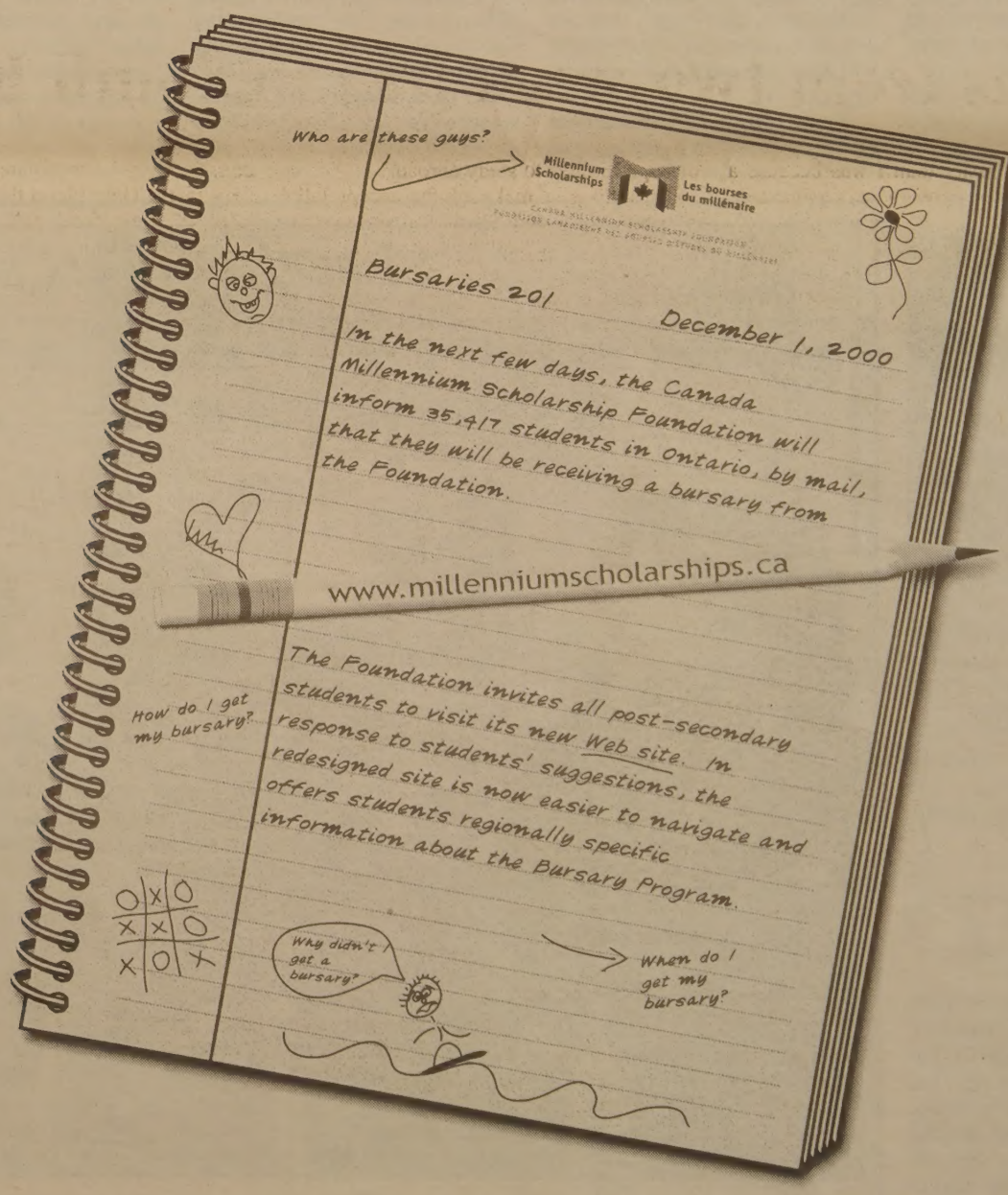
"At the start of the year we had some problems deciding what type of advertising to use to get the students' attention and also what type of ads work for the students, so now we are just testing the waters. This year we plan to have an ad run in every other edition of the *Niagara News* to grab the readers, attention and inform them of what's going on for that month. We also plan to put up more posters throughout the campus. So for those interested in participating pay attention to the advertisements around the college.

"It is always hard to figure out what the students will pay attention to but I think that this year we are doing a much better job at promoting. . . . I think that if we got more involved with the student residence we would get a better turn out because the word travels fast in such places. Also a lot of people don't realize that what goes on in the After Hours pub is put on by SAC, such as Comedy Nights and pub nights. After Hours is a student-run bar." McLaughlin said he feels that SAC does a good job setting up events for the students but "there is always room for improvement."

"The events SAC puts on are usually very well attended but sometimes I feel that people just don't want to get involved. The responsibility falls half on the students and half on SAC. The students have to want to get involved."

Starting in January or February SAC will be putting on a movie night where the students can come out to the pub with their friends and watch a movie for free. Also plans are under way for the annual Winter Fest which gets students out playing in the snow competing for prizes with their peers.

McLaughlin says SAC also supports the athletics department, peer tutoring, and parts of the orientation. For more information on what SAC does, you can look in your student handbook, walk into the SAC office or contact your class representative.


Who are these guys?
Millennium Scholarships
Les bourses du millénaire
Bursaries 201
December 1, 2000
In the next few days, the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation will inform 35,417 students in Ontario, by mail, that they will be receiving a bursary from the Foundation.
www.millenniumscholarships.ca
How do I get my bursary?
The Foundation invites all post-secondary students to visit its new Web site. In response to students' suggestions, the redesigned site is now easier to navigate and offers students regionally specific information about the Bursary Program.
Why didn't I get a bursary?
When do I get my bursary?

FACES IN THE CROWD

Forster first female mayor of Welland

By BROOKE DREDGE
Staff Writer

There comes a first time for everything. Cindy Forster is the first female mayor of Welland.

"I am proud," she said. "A lot of women have come up to me and told me that it's great. They were proud a woman ran and was elected.

"I don't feel pressured about the fact I am succeeding all men who have done this. I'm not nervous either. Nervous is trying to save someone's life that has gone into cardiac arrest. Being mayor is a big responsibility, but there is a large, qualified staff here to run the day-to-day operations.

"So far, I feel comfortable here. Some councillors have come to me and said they view the atmosphere to be more open and free. I'm hoping to continue having a more open-door policy."

Forster said she felt the issues that formed her platform are the biggest concerns. First is public consultation on issues being by council. Second is not-for-profit hydro.

Forster said a survey was conducted by Ontario Hydro showing that about 11,000 customers were unhappy with hydro rates, but that they weren't being heard.

Third, Forster said she wants to see a city hall and library the taxpayers can afford. Last would be the openness of city council's decision processes to the public.

As the new council-elect met in caucus to establish an operational structure, councillors added the public to four of its committees: arena facility, transit, civic centre and water rates review, she said.

"We will be open to adding more of the public further down the road as the committees get going. The working committees have also never had the public on them before until now."

Forster said she wants to keep the public informed on all money matters and that the finance chair plans to have the budget information posted on the city's Web site so that taxpayers can access it via the Internet. They also hope to publish it in the newspaper between January and March, and they hope to start a quarterly newsletter to update the community on council happenings.

Outside her new position, Forster said she enjoys her two stepchildren, Louise and Jason, and has four granddaughters ranging in age from one to 10.

Her husband of 24 years, Brian, has supported her completely throughout her campaign, she said.

She enjoys travelling and said she tries to get away a couple of times a year and "loves going to Mexico."

As a believer in physical fitness, she said she is a faithful walker of her two black Labrador dogs and goes to the gym two times a week.

"I find a trip to the gym to be beneficial in relieving stress after a long day, but if that doesn't do it, I jump into my Jacuzzi at home."

In her spare time, Forster said she enjoys curling up with a good novel.

She is involved in a number of organizations in Welland, including the Nurses Association, with which she has been involved for the past 10 years. She is a member of the Welland Library Commission, Welland and District Humane Society, Welland and Port Colborne Airport Commission and the Welland Rose Festival Board.

As a volunteer she works with groups including Help-A-Child-Smile, Women's Place and the Welland Food Drive.

From the time she announced in June she was running for municipal office, Forster said people were calling daily to offer to work on her campaign. They weren't just friends and family; they were people from all walks of life and political parties. Most pleasing for her, she said, was the voter turnout numbers.

"I was amazed at how many people went out and voted. Most felt it was time for a change, and some were even dissatisfied with how (former mayor Dick) Reuter was running the city, and this was their way of making their voices heard.

"Dick had said back in August at Market Square that if the community didn't like what he was doing, to tell him on Nov. 13, and that is what they did."

Forster said that if she can begin the endeavours she's highlighted she may run for a second term.

"You can't achieve a mandate in three years. You must have a continuity to run for six years to even consider finishing what you start.

"I stand (as) someone who will bring the issues to the public, give them a chance to voice their concerns and council will listen to their input before a decision is made on important policies, which is kind of a reverse to what has generally happened. I want to make sure people know they will be heard before council OKs anything."

ESL teacher returns from two-week trip to South Korea

By NAUMAN FAROOQ
Staff Writer

Many people would like to have a job that takes them to far away places. It would be nice if your company funded the entire trip as a new experience for you.

Who has a job like that?

Christie Salmon does.

Salmon, 30, an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher at Niagara College's Welland campus, recently returned from spending two weeks in South Korea.

Her visit, however, was strictly business as she says she didn't get any time to tour the country. She was sent to Seoul, the capital of South Korea.

'(My) task was to recruit students for the ESL program . . . Niagara College did very well at the (educational) fair.'

"(My) task was to recruit students for the ESL program," said Salmon.

She was representing Niagara College at a Canadian Education Fair, held at the Plaza Hotel in front of city hall. Colleges and universities were invited to represent their school at the fair.

Students interested in studying abroad attended the two-day fair and came either with their parents or alone.

Salmon said some students are interested in all programs, but some are interested just in ESL. Then there are some who are interested in ESL plus a regular program, or ESL plus a post-graduate program. "Some are only interested in post-graduate (programs)," said Salmon.

"Niagara College did very well at the fair. I had two former students helping me. These two girls are now working and living in Korea and were helping me the whole time. They were busier than I was because a lot more people were more comfortable speaking Korean."

As a whole "the fair was very successful."

Part of Salmon's job while in Korea was to meet agents who would represent the college there. "I meet agents and discuss our new programs, give them information about our ESL program and other programs. I spend around an hour and a half with each agent. We discuss all the questions they get asked, so I help them to get all the material they need for this college.

"We check our agents to see how legit they are and how many students they send over to Canada."

Salmon said her trip was a "very positive experience."

Salmon had previously lived in Korea for two years, from 1997 to 1999.

"When I lived in Korea I travelled all over the country. I was teaching English at a university in the small city of Andong. They started a mandatory English course. It was a new project. When I started I only had six colleagues and when I left I had 22, so it grew very fast."

There are no North Korean students at the college.

"We are not allowed in (North Korea), first of all, so we can't go there. And secondly those students are not allowed to study abroad. The North has a very strong military rule and the men have to serve 10 years in the military. They don't have a lot of opportunities to study abroad."

Christie Salmon is an English as a Second Language teacher at Niagara College.

Photo by Nauman Farooq

What do you make of the recent talks between North and South Korean governments?

"As long as I've been there, the North and South have always been talking, but for how long? No one knows. The threat of the invasion of North Korea to South Korea is always there."

On a lighter subject, she commented on how different the lifestyle in Korea is compared with Canada's.

"Lifestyle is generally the same. The service in Korea is outstanding compared to here. They are very helpful. They are very friendly and very warm, especially when you're a westerner.

"They are very concerned about the image of their country. You get treated very well in Korea."

About transportation she said, "The system is very good. You don't even need a car. Traffic is very congested." The subway and all transportation services are very clean, said Salmon.

"The core of Seoul is 12 million people, and surrounding areas combine to 20 million. I feel very safe there. I feel much more safe in Korea than here.

"I love Korean food. It's my favourite in the whole world. I miss it terribly. It is very distinct, different from Chinese and Japanese foods. Primarily they eat rice three times a day. Most food is very spicy. They share everything on the table in small bowls called side dishes. A main course could be marinated beef, which is *very tasty. They blend the sweet and sour* taste in their food and they also have Korean-style Chinese food, which is very popular in Korea."

Salmon said she didn't try some of the local delicacies, adding, "They eat anything out of the sea."

'I love Korean food. It's my favourite in the whole world. I miss it terribly. It is very distinct, very different from Chinese and Japanese food.'

She said she plans to take a leave of absence from the college to head off to Venezuela for six months. She will leave in January to study Spanish and to teach English. This trip is not paid for by Niagara College but rather something she is doing for herself.

She said she will be paid there, but the pay is "very little" but she'd have enough to live on plus getting a housing allowance. She will be in Caracas, the capital city of Venezuela. "I have many friends there."

Although she isn't going to miss the snow, she is going to miss the college, she said.

Salmon started working at Niagara College in 1995 before going to Korea for two years. After returning, she soon went to Spain for three months before coming back in January.

Salmon graduated from Brock University in St. Catharines with a bachelor of arts degree in psychology. She then completed a bachelor of education in teaching English as a second language.

She is teaching 12 hours a week of oral communications in Level Three of ESL.

EDITORIAL

The Niagara News is a practical lab for the Journalism-Print program, covering the college community and other areas of interest.
Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the management of the Niagara News or the administration of
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Christmas not about material objects

Amidst the media hype and advertising hysteria, is it possible we have forgotten the true meaning of Christmas?

Watching television, we see commercial after commercial of toys and presents that children practically drool over.

They talk for days about a certain toy they may want. If they don't get it, it's a trauma in their lives.

Television is polluting our society's minds with false beliefs of what Christmas is all about.

When I was younger, I thought Christmas was about receiving presents and nothing more. Most often, if I asked my parents for something, I would get it.

Since I've grown older, I have begun to realize just what the season means. I sit here and think about going home for the holidays and I get excited. I can't wait to see my family and friends.

Just being with them over the holidays will make me happy.

I miss everyone a lot and going home to visit the ones I love is probably my biggest concern. I have hardly had any thoughts of gifts in my mind, although I admit I have been worrying over what gifts to buy for my family and close friends.

Christmas should be seen more as a time for giving to the people we love rather than receiving something. Gifts will always be a big part of the festive season, mainly because we will never stop buying gifts for others, but too much importance, I think, has been put on material possessions.

Next time you're sitting and fretting over what to get a loved one, remember this: something from the heart is probably better than any other gift you can get by digging in your wallet.

Tara Ford

Please . . . Bush, shut up; Gore, give up

Please, I beg you. Make it stop.

It's been eating at me too long now. My head is spinning and my brain is aching. Please! Won't someone make the pain stop?

I can't go anywhere without hearing about it. I'm really getting sick and tired of democracy.

The ongoing struggle to gain power in the United States has left me sick to my guts.

For nearly a year now, we've been bombarded with election predictions, tabloid rumours and the political standpoints of two men who really aren't that different.

Frankly, I am sick of Democratic candidate Al Gore and Republican candidate George W. Bush. If they disappeared today, I would be happy.

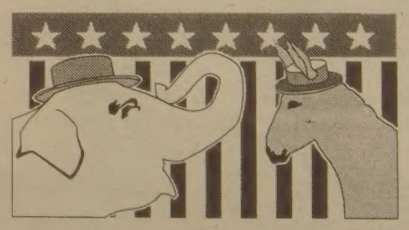
Bush needs to shut up and Gore needs to give up.

Both men are imbeciles, and are acting more like babies than potential leaders of the free world.

I understand the original ballot counts in Florida were tainted, but how many times do we have to recount the same goddamn ballots?

Gore needs to realize he lost the election.

Even if the Florida Supreme Court declares him the winner, his popularity in the rest of the country will be forever stained.



Democracy is about the individual's right to elect a leader so what Gore has done is wrong.

He has taken the power from the people and given it to the courts and other political figureheads.

The election is now so confusing even most political analysts cannot explain it to the masses.

Gore is not the only one to blame. Bush is just as guilty of stealing the people's rights.

He is so concerned with securing his victory he is finding legal ways to stall the recounts.

If Bush believes he is the next president of the United States, let the recounts take place once and for all.

I wonder though, if another election were called in the U.S.A. right now, would either man win?

I don't think any right-minded individual would vote for either moron.

I think our neighbours to the south are finding out quickly that their vaunted system does not work.

By no means am I claiming the Canadian system is any better, but we have more idiotic politicians on the ballot.

At least, in Canada we can choose from the whole barrel of monkeys.

I'm not sure there is any solution to this problem.

As citizens we have to learn to accept some things in life. Politicians should too.

Democracy is dead.

Scott Thomson

Your voice or opinion is welcome in our Letters to the Editor section. Our policy regarding letter submissions is this: All letters must be received on the Friday one week prior to publication. Each letter must include the writer's name, college identification number and program of study.
All letters must be signed and include a day and evening telephone number for verification use only.
All letters can be mailed or brought to the Niagara News newsroom, Room S212, Simcoe Building, Welland Campus.

ADVERTISING RULES: The advertiser agrees that the publisher shall not be liable for damages arising out of errors in advertisements beyond the amount paid for the space actually occupied by the portion of the advertisement in which the error occurred. This applies whether such error is due to the negligence of its servants or otherwise.
There shall be no liability for non-insertions of any advertisement beyond the amount paid for such advertisement.
All advertisers are asked to check their advertisements after first insertion. We accept responsibility for only one incorrect insertion unless notified immediately after publication. Errors, which do not lessen the value of the advertisement, are not eligible for corrections by a make-good advertisement. There shall be no liability for non-insertion of any advertisement beyond the amount paid for such advertisement. We reserve the right to edit, revise, classify or reject any advertisement.

VIEWPOINTS

Fearing wake-up call on inaccuracy

By JENNIFER CHORNLEY
Staff Writer
Column

On the Saturday before the federal election, I received a call from one of the candidates I had interviewed for the Nov. 24 edition of *Niagara News* at 10:30 a.m. when I had just woken up. The man was one of the candidates I had included in the Federal Elections 2000 Candidates' information chart for the Niagara region races.

I picked up the phone and said hello. When he responded I recognized the voice and I nearly dropped a load of big smelly bricks. My face turned to stone.

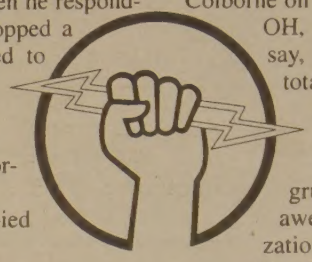
I was in a quick state of hysteria thinking "OK, what did I do wrong?

Did I misquote the person? Was the information wrong?"

What happened? I could have sworn I copied down the correct information for my chart.

Then he dropped the bombshell.

He wanted to know if anybody I knew was interested in working at the federal election voting station in Port Colborne on Monday.



OH, MY GOD! As the Alka-Seltzer commercials say, "Oh, what a relief it is. What a relief." I can totally relate to that statement now.

Anyway, this gives me an opportunity to thank all the candidates who co-operated by taking time to give me content for the chart. It was a gruelling three weeks of hard work, but it was an awesome experience, one which relied on organizational skills and planning.

Thank you and congratulations to the candidates who won and better luck next time for those who didn't.

Credit companies prey on students

By PATRICIA HUGHES
Staff Writer
Column

Students, beware!

Don't trust credit cards, especially Visa. A few years ago I was lured in by Visa. I was told it would benefit me in the future.

I didn't think it would be bad to have a credit card. It could help me in emergencies. So I got it; $500 was my limit. In less than a year I still hadn't used it. My limit increased to $2,000.

It was obvious they wanted me to use it. Why else would they have given me more money? I started to use it for small things at first, like restaurants and gifts, all the while paying the minimum amount every month.

When school started I realized my student loan might not be enough to cover all my expenses so I used my Visa. I started to miss payments and figured I'd start paying them again in the summer when I started summer employment. By summer I had maxed out my card. I paid a little bit each week until unexpected expenses occurred, such as car trouble and helping out my "poor" 19-year-old brother.

When September came I tried to put money through the ATM machine to pay Visa, but it kept my card. Visa stopped sending me statements so I lost track of how much I owed.

After a few months of not hearing from them, I quit worrying about it.

On Nov. 16, I tried to use my bank card to pay for a purchase but the notice came up "insufficient funds". I knew that couldn't be right because my loan money was in my account.

I called CIBC and they said all my money was transferred to Visa. Without notification or my consent, Visa took everything from my account except for $8. This wasn't just money I had lying around. This was money I was using to live on.

I called Visa and told their representative they had taken my entire student loan. They said there was nothing they could do, and they weren't going to give any of it back. In fact, they were more worried about getting the rest of what I owed them. I was just relieved my rent payment had already been withdrawn before they had a chance to take that too.

Sure, I accept blame. I owe Visa money, but I feel they took advantage of me because I'm a student. I blame CIBC because I trusted them with my money and they allowed Visa to take it, leaving just enough to keep my account open, of course. Are they this careless with everybody's money? I intend to close my account as soon as possible.

When you see credit card representatives in the school, don't let them lure you in. Even if you don't intend to use the card, they still try and tempt you with nice gifts.

Take it from me: they don't care if you're a student or if you don't have the money to cover your bills. I feel credit card companies should show leniency towards students.

I suppose if they have to steal money from a student's account, then perhaps they need it more than I thought.

Wrinkles shouldn't replace sex appeal

By CRYSTAL LANGILLE
Staff Writer
Column

Think you're good looking, right?

You're young and smart and have all the guys' heads turning, right?

Let me ask you something. When you're about 40, would you consider getting breast implants to please your husband? Or how about plastic surgery to look younger?

I'm just asking because I recently read an article in *Homemaker's* magazine about how women become "invisible" about the age of 32.

Whether it is husbands leaving their wives for younger women, or employers removing female sales representatives from the public's eye, women are being discarded by their male counterparts.

There's an attitude that women don't age well.

Wrinkles on a man's face may be considered character lines, while on women, they are perceived as being old.

Women move, therefore, from being sex objects to being old and replaceable.

The desire for "young and fertile" has existed since the beginning of time. Beauty is portrayed as being young, as shown on fashion runways, on television and in advertisements.

What happens to us when we don't look young anymore?

Eighty per cent of cosmetic surgery in Canada is performed on women, and with 35 to 40 per cent of Canadian marriages ending in divorce, some of us can look forward to our ex-husbands trading us in for younger women.

Wrinkles on a man's face may be considered character lines, while on women, they are perceived as being old.

Men like multimillionaire Donald Trump have left their first wives for "trophy wives."

In the movies, actor Sean Connery, 69, was chased around by 29-year-old Catherine Zeta Jones in Entrapment. She could be his granddaughter, for goodness sake!

I understand older men probably do this because older women have become financially independent and stronger and are willing to speak their minds. This leaves men utterly lost in their everlasting power struggle.

Besides, a young naïve girl wouldn't talk back. Right, guys?

You're dreaming.

Women are only going to get smarter and stronger.

Women won't be pushed around anymore, and if dating a younger woman puts your one-track minds at ease, then by all means, go for it.

Just remember what a negative message you are sending to women, including your daughters. You're telling them they're not as worthy as they were when they were younger and that they are not as worthy as you are at a similar age.

Remember that behind every great man there is an even greater woman.

I don't believe I have to explain that statement. Besides, I don't have time. I only have 10 years before I become "invisible."

Letter: United Way coverage created success

Dear Editor:

On behalf of the Niagara College United Way campaign committee, we want to thank *Niagara News*, and particularly reporter Kevin Hartford, for your excellent coverage of this year's campaign.

The articles undoubtedly contributed to its success, helping raise both funds and awareness among staff and students of the important role United Way plays in our community.

We would also like to express our appreciation to all those who supported the campaign both financially and through volunteering their time, energy and expertise. It was a fantastic team effort that demonstrated very strongly the college's concern for our community.

Sincerely,
Darrell Neufeld
and Rena Posteraro
Co-chairs, United Way
Campaign Committee

Correction

In the Volume 31 Issue 5 edition of the *Niagara News* published Nov. 24, 2000, Sherry McGratten's surname was misspelled in the story on page 13 headlined "Niagara initiates new landmine committee."

It is the policy of Niagara News to correct errors of fact.

POST-ELECTION 2000

With the federal election results of Nov. 27 certified, Niagara News spoke to the new and returning Members of Parliament from the Niagara region asking them for their post-election reactions and plans.

Erie-Lincoln

Photo by: Couvrette Ottawa

By JENNIFER CHORNLEY
Staff Writer

John Maloney is one of three federal candidates re-elected Nov. 27. Maloney, the Liberal MP for Erie-Lincoln, says, "I am extremely happy to return to office."

Recounting what he views as Liberal Party successes, Maloney says the financial surplus will contribute 50 per cent towards debt reduction and towards social and economic programs.

The Liberals have shown strong support for post-secondary education and have exercised this by increasing the scholarship exemption for taxes from $500 to $3,000, he says.

The education credit for students has doubled. It is $400 for a full-time student and $120 for a part-time student.

Maloney's goals for "a large constituency," which consists of small urban and large rural areas, include plans according to the needs of the town, city or rural area.

In Fort Erie, Maloney says, he wants to concentrate on the renewal of the Peace Bridge. "Either construct the bridge to double span, or construct a new bridge altogether."

Also, he wants to deal with the situation regarding the Point Abino lighthouse. The federal government wants to be relieved of the responsibilities of owning the lighthouse, since technological advances have decreased the use of the lighthouse as a navigational aid.

In Port Colborne, he says he wants to focus on industry and former industrial sites, such as that for Inco, for an industrial assessment of possible soil contamination.

Maloney says he's "very happy that the federal government has taken a leading role in this situation."

In Dunnville, the mayor has put forth a request to deal with the deteriorating concrete break wall at the entrance to the harbour on Lake Erie.

Maloney also wants to concentrate on an infrastructure program for new sewer and water lines in areas in Erie-Lincoln such as Campden, where there is "a compelling need" for new lines. The federal, provincial and municipal governments will each chip in one-third of the cost. For rural areas, the federal government will help with agricultural issues by creating an agriculture safety net. This is a plan farmers can fall back on when "Mother Nature isn't kind."

Maloney was the parliamentary secretary to the minister of justice.

He is advocating a new Youth Justice Act that will replace the Young Offenders Act, if passed in the new Parliament. This act will be reintroduced at the level it had reached before the dissolution of parliament. New anti-drug legislation is to be introduced, along with increased funding to police to fight crime.

Maloney says he wants to deal with social issues, such as changes to the Employment Insurance Act, funding for pharmacare and home-care health systems and providing more assistance for cleaner water and air.

Niagara Falls

Photo Submitted

By JENNIFER CHORNLEY
Staff Writer

Gary Pillitteri is one of three re-elected Members of Parliament in the Niagara Region.

The owner of Pillitteri Estates Winery says he "feels wonderful" despite the fact he has a cold.

His goals for the riding of Niagara Falls are to make sure the riding gets "excellent services" and become more actively involved in the wine industry. His winery opened in 1993. Prior to that he was an orchard and grape farmer and wine- maker.

Pillitteri says he has enjoyed politics all his life. He ran for municipal politics as an alderman for Niagara-on-the-Lake from 1985 to 1988 and in the 1988 federal election but wasn't elected. Pillitteri has been "always been a Liberal."

The Liberals, he says, want to make sure the economy can continue to grow, create more jobs, concentrate on more tax cuts and paying down the debt. He says the government will work in the best interest for the economy and for Canada.

He anticipates the government will continue with the proposed Young Justice Act, replacing the Young Offenders Act, in the next session of Parliament, along with other legislation that died when the election call came.

The government will continue investing in programs for young people so "they have a future." Since the changing world economy, Pillitteri targets needed legislation that would "to protect our children from exploitation."

With the mudslinging campaign between the Liberals and Canadian Alliance party, Pillitteri says, "I didn't feel comfortable. Instead of putting on a platform they mud slung."

He continued, "It's the American style. We are becoming more American every day."

Total Votes in Niagara Region

Liberals	77,809	**Natural Law Party**	502
Canadian Alliance	56,459	**Green Party of Canada**	497
Progressive Conservative	22,724	**Canadian Action**	427
New Democratic Party	14,641	**Marxist Leninist Party**	243
Christian Heritage Party	640	Source: www.canoe.ca	

Niagara Centre

By JENNIFER CHORNLEY
Staff Writer

In Niagara Centre, Tony Tirabassi is the successor to former Speaker of the House Gib Parent.

"I am absolutely tired, no, exhausted. The campaign was short but demanding. I am elated but tired," he says.

Now that the 43-year-old Tirabassi has been elected, he says he wants to work very closely with the grassroots (municipal) government and concentrate on the issues regarding the environment, health care and industry.

He will work with the local city councils to find out where the federal government can be of some assistance, he says.

"When I go to Ottawa I will become familiar with the national issues" and with these issues, he will see where the cities fit in.

"I am a huge team player. I don't believe in I, I, I. There is a huge government there and I am going to learn who does what in Ottawa so I can learn where to get what. I want to start building bridges."

Tirabassi says with the economy "in balance," the Liberals can "concentrate on the surplus, reduce the debt and lower the disposable income tax."

Tirabassi is the youngest of the new members. It's a situation he's familiar with since he was elected to Thorold city council at the age of 24. This isn't new for him and he doesn't feel awkward. "I have a youthful outlook on how to deal with that (youth) in public."

He says he will run again if he is successful as an MP and he is "savouring" his win.

Tirabassi says he will work hard to maintain his long-term commitment to the electors and when he runs in the next election its up to the constituents to decide.

He also has been asked by various schools to discuss with Grade 7 students how to set up student elections and how the system runs, something which he says, "I have a soft spot for." This will help him keep in touch with the schools and address the concerns of these students regarding post-secondary education.

Tirabassi said he also wants to "make sure the government will invest in technology, so there are jobs for these students in the future."

St. Catharines

Photo Submitted

By JENNIFER CHORNLEY
Staff Writer

Walt Lastewka has been elected for a third consecutive term for the federal constituency of St. Catharines Nov. 27.

He triumphed over Randy Taylor Dumont, the Canadian Alliance candidate and former radio talk show host for 610 CKTB, a St. Catharines radio station.

Lastewka says, "It was a great election and I am glad it is over with." He says didn't like the "negative-smear campaign," so instead he took the "positive high road."

"This is the most negative-smear campaign since I have been involved in 1972."

Lastewka says his two goals are to continue working with small business to create jobs, a process by which Niagara develops jobs, and to continue his work with the provincial Ministry of Labour and the Niagara Region Homeless Committee.

The federal government has invested $1.7 million in the Niagara area, and Lastewka says he wants to make sure the money is spent "efficiently" and gives as much return as possible to youth, women and the homeless in general.

His personal goal is to be recognized in the community. "Walt Lastewka gets things done, no matter in what area. It can be for Niagara College training or Brock University training or for community care."

Lastewka says he will work again with city council regarding its business plan.

For two years, Lastewka was the parliamentary secretary to the minister of industry. In March, he says Prime Minister Jean Chrétien asked him to stay and be the small business advocate for Canada, but that could change in a number of weeks.

In regard to the not-being-able-to-vote-against-your-party issue, Lastewka says the members are free to vote against private members' bills and government bills.

Legislation that requires party unanimity is financial bills. If the bills are defeated, this leads to a vote of non-confidence in the government, resulting in an election call.

Lastewka says he anticipates the Liberals will concentrate on the implementation of Canada's Health Action plan, signed by the prime minister and premiers in September.

Also on the agenda is continuing emphasis on research, innovation and technology for the environment.

This is Lastewka's third re-election since Oct. 25, 1993. His political involvement prior to that was as chair and co-chair for Gib Parent's successful campaigns from 1972 until 1993. Parent recently retired as Speaker of the House of Commons.

Federal Party Leaders Source: cbc.ca

Leader	Party	Riding	Number of Votes
Jean Chretien	Liberals	Saint-Maurice	23,345
Stockwell Day	Canadian Alliance	Okanagan-Coquihalla	28,799
Gilles Duceppe	Bloc Quebecois	Laurier-Sainte-Marie	23,472
Alexa McDonough	New Democratic Party	Halifax	16,567
Joe Clark	Progressive Conservative	Calgary Centre	26,356

Party	# of Seats	%	Party	# of Seats	%
Liberals	172	40.78%	NDP	13	8.53%
Canadian Alliance	66	25.50%	P.C.	12	12.21%
Bloc Quebecois	38	10.68%	Other	0	2.29%

Number of Seats each party gained in Parliament. Source: www.cbc.ca

FROM THE VINEYARDS

Winery and Viticulture program covers all aspects

By PAUL FINELLI
Staff Writer

Students in Niagara College's new Winery and Viticulture Technician program are sure to bear much fruit.

That's the feeling of Steve Gill, development co-ordinator of the two-year program that is offered this year at the Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake through the School of Horticulture and Agribusiness.

A Niagara graduate with a three-year business administration diploma, Gill brings knowledge to the program, especially from having worked almost five years as manager of retail operations for Hillebrand Estates Winery in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"We started the program in September and we've designed the program in conjunction with the wine industry, using their input and what they want graduates to have, what skills that they feel that the graduates should have to be successful in the industry . . . So the whole program has been set up that way, with their input — and we continue to do so," Gill said.

"We have an advisory committee that is made up of various (grape) growers, various people (like) viticulturists, wine makers, owners of different wineries, right from the equipment supplier to the Grape Marketing Board, the Wine Council. It's very extensive."

Among the 20-plus Niagara-area wineries and vineyards with staff who act as advisers are Hillebrand Estates Winery, Andres Wines Ltd., Inniskillin Wines and Stonechurch Vineyards.

For students, Gill outlined, "Term 1 starts with the general viticulture, where they go out and they spend 50 per cent of those classes in the vineyard — not only our vineyard out back but different growers' and wineries' vineyards. And they learn about grapes. They learn how the vine grows, the best ways to grow it, the best way to tie it, . . . the best growing conditions for it, the soil analysis. They go through the whole gamut of how to grow good grapes. You grow good grapes, you get good wine.

"And they get introduction to (wine) chemistry. They start making white wine immediately, and I say immediately, but depending on harvest when it's (grapes) available."

In a course called sensory evaluations of wines, he said, students are "tasting different wines, various wines, and understanding the characteristics of different variety, understanding the types you can have in wine, and it's a very technical course, which is more than appreciation. It's very technical, so you learn technically how the crop really takes form."

In Term 2, the program focuses studies with courses like vineyard pruning/maintenance practices and vineyard soils, fertilizers and irrigation, "and each one of those really is an extremely important part of growing a good vine and having a very successful vineyard," he said.

With vineyard pruning/maintenance practices, he added, "it's a perfect time of the year because there's a lot to be done that time of year. Again, the students will be out. They will be cleaning, . . . they'll be tying (up the) grapes. That will be part of the class, learning how to do it and actually doing it. It's very practical, hands-on, the whole course.

"Wine chemistry and microbiology, again, gets more into the analysis of different components of the chemistry involved with winemaking and the microbiology involved with that, within the wine and things of that nature."

He said, in winery cellar operations, "there's a lot of different equipment that they have to learn about . . . They have to learn this equipment and to be able to operate it properly, be able to maintain it properly. So they get a good grasp of what this equipment does and then they get some hands-on experience with it as well."

The winery and viticulture operations project, he added, "is basically understanding how the business aspect works with the winery. A winery is one of the very few types of businesses that is completely, vertically integrated. When I say that I mean they plant the vines, they grow the grapes, they pick the grapes, they crush the grapes, they make the wine."

Term 3 is mainly a four-month practicum with a local winery. "It's very important. They'll be working with a (local) winery and getting different aspects of the winery. The view of it is it starts in September of next year and that's when they (wineries) harvest. So they'll (students) will be very involved with harvest and they'll be involved with working in the wine industry almost at the right spot." He added, students working at the winery "will understand that one department directly affects another department."

Regarding the participation of the wineries in the students' practical learning, he said, "We have a lot of interest in it, a lot of excitement from the industry with it as well."

When students are in Term 4, they will take advanced winemaking, which is making red wine. "Red wine is in a way more complicated to make than white wine," the co-ordinator explained. "There's a few more elements to it. You can age it in oak. You can ferment it in oak. There's a lot of things you can do with it, and if the season is right they'll maybe harvest a wine or an icewine if we're really lucky."

In Term 5, the co-ordinator continued, as the students "understand the vine and how well it grows," they must then take vineyard management. "Now we have a whole vineyard. You have to manage it. You've got to know more than just learning the vine; you've got to manage the whole vineyard. There is a lot to know there, same with the winery management (course.)"

Wine marketing and sales would include learning how to work with the Liquor Control Board of Ontario and understanding how wines are selected for restaurants and what goes into making a wine label and how to store wine bottles.

First-year students in the Winery and Viticulture Technician program examine the fruits of their labours, literally, as part of their general viticulture course.

Photo by Paul Finelli

Term 5 centres mostly on European countries' wines, such as France, Italy and Germany. "We do New World wines first because it's a little easier to understand; Old World wines is a lot more complicated."

In another project, students in the final term of the program will have to "combine all different" aspects of the vineyard and the winery that they have already learned.

"Then they finish this program. They'll be highly skilled in a lot of different areas (and) move through the wine industry," he said, adding the jobs can range from cellar hands, to lab technicians, to vineyard and/or winery management.

Asked if the wine industry is a growth industry, Gill nodded. "The industry has seen a lot of growth over the last few years, and they're predicting a lot more growth."

Students in the program, he explained, will benefit from the five-acre vineyard, which is jointly owned and shared with Brock University in St. Catharines for research, teaching and promotions. The vines were planted late this year because of the weather, and had students were out there weeding, staking up the vines. There was still a little bit more work. Some of the students were out there doing some more work in the vineyard, said Gill.

Eventually, the vineyard, which students will have managed themselves, will include a vine library, spacing, trellis and root-stock trails, and a hybrid training lab, among other things. For now, the facilities in the main campus building are sufficient, Gill said.

"Not only that," he continued, "some of them have positions or part-time jobs with different wineries. Some of the wineries are approaching me: 'Can we use a couple of your students?' I'm like, sure."

Winery students today, wine industry leaders tomorrow

By PAUL FINELLI
Staff Writer

Folks in Niagara College's Winery and Viticulture Technician program are toasting the college's recent deal with a group that supports and serves the wine industry.

Niagara College and Vintner's Enterprise, of St. Catharines, signed an agreement establishing a partnership between them on Nov. 17. The new partnership secures the collaborative development and delivery of research, training and education services designed for the wine and viticulture industry.

With this new three-year agreement, Niagara College and Vintner's Enterprise will draw on their respective resources and expertise to provide an integrated, one-stop approach to incomparable education and training for students and the wine industry.

The hope is that Niagara-trained students will be among the industry's leaders in future years, said a college press release.

"This agreement is a reflection of the desire and commitment of both Niagara College and Vintner's Enterprise to meeting the training needs of the wine industry and ensuring that it continues to thrive and grow," said Dan Patterson, college president, in the press release.

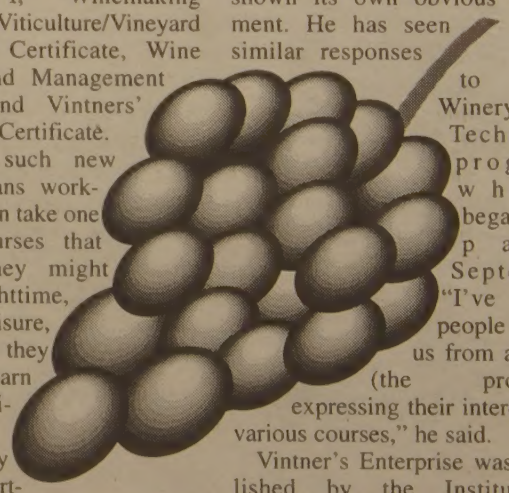
The initial class of 23 students in the new two-year program at the Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake will benefit much from the new deal, said Steve Gill, program development co-ordinator, echoing Patterson's sentiments. "This is the first step."

This new deal, he said, not only complements what the program offers to students and the wine industry, but it even extends its reach. "This is an offshoot to it (the program)."

The college and Vintner will jointly market, develop and manage the delivery of their certificate programs. As well, they will jointly establish a student tuition fee structure, consistent with other educational institutions pertaining to the industry.

Gill said this entails some excitement throughout the program in various ways. For instance, the college and Vintner will regularly offer, starting in January, individual wine and viticulture courses - the same delivered in the full-time winery program - in the evening through the college's Continuing Education. Some courses, such as introduction to wine chemistry, sensory evaluation of wines and wines of the new worlds, are already offered.

In addition, four new shorter certificate programs will be operated jointly, apart from the college's own day program. The four programs are Winemaking Certificate I, Winemaking Certificate II, Viticulture/Vineyard Management Certificate, Wine Marketing and Management Certificate and Vintners' Master Taster Certificate.



Gill said such new additions means working citizens can take one or more courses that they feel they might enjoy at nighttime, and at their leisure, if they wish, they can slowly earn their certificate.

"It's very exciting to partner with Vintners' Enterprise," he said, summing up his satisfaction with the new arrangement.

As for the outside interest in the new partnership, Gill assured it's not just the wine industry that has shown its own obvious excitement. He has seen similar responses to the Winery and Technician program, which began this past September "I've had people phone us from all over (the province) expressing their interests for various courses," he said.

Vintner's Enterprise was established by the Institute of Enterprise Education to focus on business, leadership and human resource development for the wine industry.

SANTA CLAUS IS 'Tis the season to get Out of the Cold

By RYAN McLAUGHLIN
Staff Writer

In Luke 10:27, Jesus said, "Love your neighbour as yourself," and went on to tell the story of the Good Samaritan, who out of the kindness of his heart, stopped to help a stranger and asked nothing in return.

In biblical times there was great enmity between Jews and Samaritans, as the former believed they were the true heirs of Abraham and Moses. However, on one occasion this conflict was put aside. On the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, a Jew was beaten and left naked by robbers. A priest, who happened to be walking down the road, noticed the man but quickly passed him by on the other side, as did a temple servant. As the man lay on the side of the road half dead, a Samaritan happened by. Upon seeing the man, the Samaritan took pity on him. Disregarding their differences, he cared for him and gave him shelter for the night.

More than 2,000 years later, this selflessness is not lost. A volunteer group of people takes it upon themselves to make sure no one goes hungry or has to sleep in the cold. The program is called Out of the Cold, and from November to March it helps the needy do just that, stay out of the cold.

Cory Schuman has the responsibility of making sure that all goes smoothly at the First Baptist Church, in Welland, where Out of the Cold is held every Thursday.

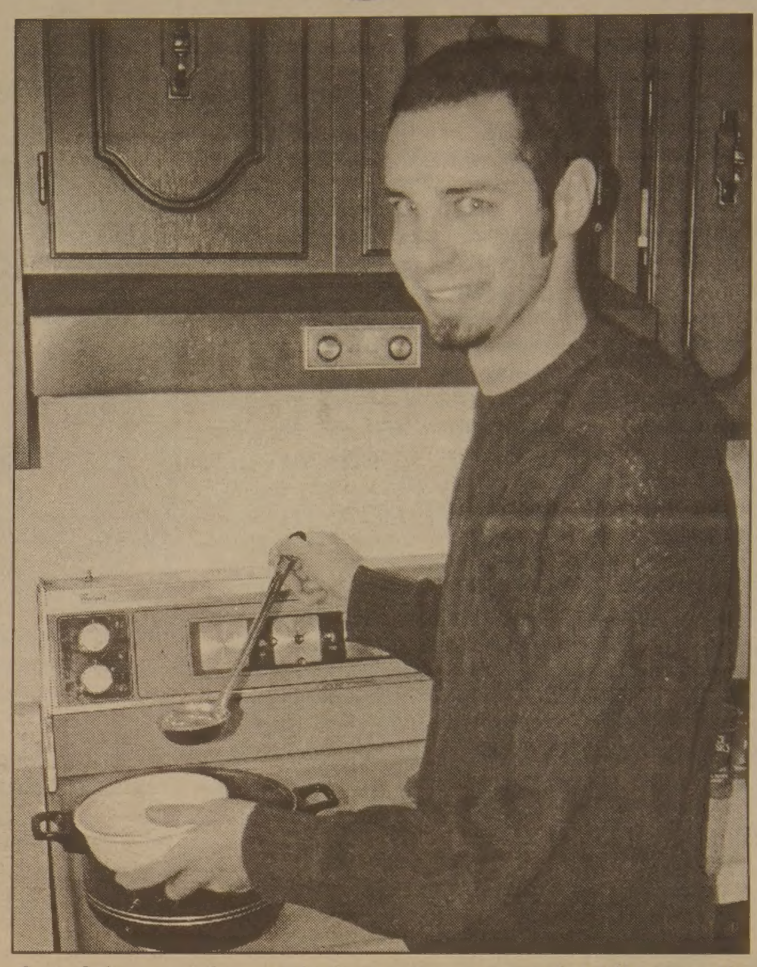
Schuman, a site co-ordinator for the program, is in charge of the church after it changes into a shelter and soup kitchen. His responsibilities include making sure all supplies needed for the night are there, and if anything needs to be purchased, it all goes through his approval. He is in charge of calling the church owners should anything go wrong.

An avid volunteer since high school, Schuman has been with the program since its beginning in 1996. When he first volunteered with Out of the Cold, he said, he "was the youngest by at least 10 years," but has since become "the model" age from which the program targets its volunteers.

"I was an active member of The Red Cross in my high school. I volunteered for a lot of fund-raisers that the Red Cross had done. On one occasion I met the head of the Welland chapter, and she told me about this opportunity and asked if I would be interested."

Schuman, 23, is in his fourth year of volunteering his time, and he was recently given the position of site co-ordinator. "I had known the chair of the steering committee, Bob Bond, since the beginning, and he was impressed that someone as young as I was interested."

"Bob Bond is like a mentor to me. He has given me a lot of guidance and inspiration of the last four years," said Schuman.



Cory Schuman takes a minute to prepare some food for himself. Schuman volunteers his free time as a site co-ordinator for the Out of the Cold program which feeds the needy.

Photo by Ryan McLaughlin

The program operates at a different church each night of the week and is staffed by volunteers.

"We shoot for 50 (volunteers), more or less. That way you don't have volunteer burnout," he said, adding, "You need about 12 volunteers a night." Schuman urges anyone who wishes to help or who wants additional information to call 905-714-9483.

Asked what a volunteer needs to do, he said, "It depends on which shift you volunteer for, but anything from serving guests and making meals, to making sure no one is making too much noise after lights out."

With the exception of some teenagers, the majority of the "guests" of the program are "families or middle-aged people who just need a helping hand."

"It's amazing that even with our 'booming economy' our numbers keep going up."

Schuman said his desire to help people carries over to his job as well. He works full time for the Welland and District Association for Community Living, working with children with special needs.

He said he enjoys his job "very much" and doesn't think he wants another job outside of this field. "It gives me a sense of purpose. I feel like I'm helping people."

He said his job mostly involves "taking the kids out in public and teaching them to act 'normal' in a social setting, with the end result of making them productive members of society."

"One of the cool parts of my job is I work with seven different families over 40 hours a week. It allows me to see all the different types of family units. It is amazing what these families have to go through.

"It's seven different kids with seven different sets of rules. It's a lot of bosses, and then you get the kids that think they're the bosses."

Schuman said he sees some similarities between the children he takes care of and himself at their ages. He especially "finds similarities with the ones with temper problems," he said with a chuckle.

"I sometimes wonder if we are in a society where we over-diagnose people. If a kid has a problem, put him on Ritalin; if a kid has a problem, it's a mental disorder. Kids aren't allowed to grow anymore it seems. They are either medicated or facilitated."

While gently rocking in his chair, Schuman said he "honestly" doesn't know what keeps him interested in the things he does for others, but he just has a "fundamental need to want to help" people.

"I'd like to think I make a difference, I'm sure I do, at least in some small way.

"You make time for what's important to you, and if helping people is important to you, you make the time. Also, having no social life helps," he said with a grin.

Youngsters at the Niagara College Daycare Centre at the Welland campus show their Christmas spirit.

Photo by Hilary Taylor

Committee seeks public funds

By JENNIFER CHORNLEY
Staff Writer

It's official.

The Adopt-a-Minefield committee fund-raising campaign is under way to raise $10,000 for the Canadian Landmine Foundation.

In a meeting on Nov. 30, the committee at Niagara College finalized its target of $10,000 to be raised before March 31, 2001.

The committee is concentrating on future fund-raising events such as penny drives, a Department Christmas Challenge, a Maid of the Mist dinner and a Valentine's Dance. The committee hopes to help the foundation to clear the world of landmines. The vision of the committee is to "see the Niagara College flag flying in the middle of a school playground in a country made treacherous by landmines - anywhere from Peru to Mozambique. The flag would indicate that the playground has been cleared of all anti-personnel landmines, and that children can play in this area without fear of losing an arm, a leg or their life."

With the penny drive, students and faculty would be able to dump what Sean Taylor, 20, a first-year Journalism-Print program student, calls "a useless form of currency" into containers. All donations will go to the Canadian Landmine Foundation.

The Department Christmas challenge is a donation of $10 or an amount to suit your budget. Christmas gift donation boxes will be in the departments.

Niagara College began its partnership with the Canadian Landmine Foundation by establishing the new committee on Nov. 2.

This group was created after Daniel Livermore, ambassador for Landmine Action, spoke at a presentation for the college on Oct. 27.

Mary Lou Eden, treasurer of the committee and an English as a Second Language professor, says that for any amount raised by the committee, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) will contribute three times the donated amount. Since the committee has raised $50, CIDA will match that with $150.

Donations can be delivered to the International Education Department in S102 at the Welland campus in care of Mary Lou Eden, treasurer. Cheques should be made payable to the Canadian Landmine Foundation.

COMING TO TOWN

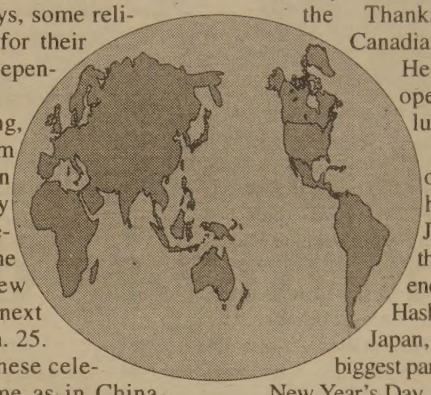
It might not be Christmas everywhere

By NAUMAN FAROOQ
Staff Writer

Christmas.

For most Canadians, it is a time for celebration, a time when families get together to exchange presents and eat large meals. (Ever wonder why Santa is so chubby?)

However, it isn't Christmas throughout the world, as people in different countries celebrate different holidays, some religious, some for their country's independence.



Jinhua Yang, 23, from China, said in his country citizens celebrate the Chinese New Year, which next year is on Jan. 25.

The Taiwanese celebrate the same as in China, said Yulun Huang, 18, from Taiwan, but instead they call it the Lunar New Year.

The Arabic calendar is based on the lunar year, but the months have different names. The most celebrated events in Saudi Arabia are the two Eids, celebrated by Muslims throughout the world.

Feras Al-Qudaihi, 20, from Saudi Arabia, said Arabs like to celebrate Eid Ul-Fitr after the month of Ramadan, currently going on, and Eid Ul-Edha, which is celebrated after Hajj, the Islamic pilgrimage to Makkah.

The most celebrated event in South Korea, says Junhwan Kim, 20, from South Korea, is Harvest Moon day. This day is similar to the Thanksgiving Day Canadians celebrate. He said Koreans operate by the lunar calendar.

The Japanese, on the other hand, don't. The Japanese go by the English calendar, and Minori Hashinoto, 25, from Japan, said their biggest party of the year is New Year's Day.

Fanja Andriamampianina, 21, from the island of Madagascar (located in the Indian Ocean), said those in that country celebrate Christmas there just like here in Canada, but "a very important day" in their calendar is June 26, the independence day of Madagascar.

Alexandra Cardiles, 34, from the Philippines, said the Filipinos also celebrate Christmas and the new year.

Patrizia Scifo, 22, from Venezuela, said Venezuelans do celebrate Christmas, but they celebrate it on Dec. 24, rather than on Dec. 25 as is done in most countries.

Alfonso Parra, 20, from Colombia, said Colombians celebrate Christmas and New Year's Day on the same day as Canadians.

"The most important day is the birth of Jesus Christ (Dec. 25)," said Luis Casanova, 18, from Mexico.

Fabio Rizzo, 28, from Italy, said Italians also celebrate Christmas and New Year's Day in their country.

Time for Christmas shopping

By PATRICIA HUGHES
Staff Writer

'Tis the season.

Christmas is just around the corner and people are crowding the shopping malls looking for the perfect gifts.

Cheryl Pitkin, 34, of Welland, says, "It can be hard to find something nice and affordable. It's best to go on Boxing Day when all the (Christmas) sales are on."

Pitkin says she hates to go to the mall around Christmas time because people tend to get pushy. "I like to shop, but within the first 10 minutes I want to leave. It gets frustrating."

She says the best gifts she has purchased so far are water fountains from Wal-Mart. "They're original and nice to look at. For $20 you can't go wrong."

Jamie Fletcher, 23, of Welland, says she loves Christmas shopping. "I love listening to the Christmas music that plays. It gets me in the Christmas spirit."

Fletcher says shopping around the holidays can get hectic. "You just have to be patient." She says the bigger department stores like Zellers and Wal-Mart are the best bet. "They pretty much have everything you need in one store."

She says she always has trouble buying for the opposite sex. "Guys are always the hardest to buy for. You never know what they'll like and they never tell you." She says for girls you can't go wrong with candles and bath products. "They're cheap and girls love them."

Fletcher's advice about Christmas shopping is this: "Go early. All the good stuff goes fast."

My sincere best wishes to
all students and staff for a warm,
safe and peaceful holiday season.
May you return in 2001
re-energized and ready for success.

Dan Patterson, President

A Time for Giving

Regional Police help others for holidays

By AARON YZERMAN
Staff Writer

The Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) encourages you to help make Christmas time more enjoyable for others. The Niagara Regional Police Food and Toy Drive, now in its eighth year, will give donated toys and food to families who need them during the holidays.

"Kids need food and toys around the holidays," says Sgt. David Brennan. "It makes a really big difference to the families."

Donations of non-perishable food items and new or unwrapped toys can be delivered to any office of the NRPS and at customer service areas of the Pen Centre in St. Catharines, the Seaway Mall in Welland, and regional Toys "R" Us stores.

The Seaway Mall is a new addition to the program this year, and Brennan says the police want to add more donation venues. "If they have two, three or more sources (to give to), it tends to sink in," he says. "Every year we try to undertake something new. It succeeds in getting the message across."

Brennan says the police usually receive about 450 to 500 toys each year and about 150 bags of food. "Ultimately, the people that need it are getting it."

The drive began on Dec. 1 and will run until Dec. 24. Brennan says, "We'll take anything up to the 24th. Normally, when it comes to toys, the sooner the better, (but) we don't like to put up a deadline. It's nice to have those donations we can get (and) can make a difference," he says.

"It sends a good message. When you realize how little other people have, you can say 'You know, I don't really have it that bad.'"

Niagara Regional Police Service Const. Geoffrey Purdie, 29, of 33 Division in Welland, and Marisa Moroz, 22, customer service representative for the Seaway Mall, discuss Christmas by the gift tree for the Niagara Regional Police Food and Toy Drive at the Seaway Mall.
Photo by Aaron Yzerman

Pressure to give gifts makes Christmas dull

By BILL STEPHENSON
Staff Writer
Column

Christmas is coming, but I don't care.

I did care. There were Christmas Eves when I wouldn't sleep because of the excitement running through my body. I'm sure many children will feel the same way this year.

My last few Christmases have been events I didn't want to go to, and I was glad when Christmas was gone.

I don't want to buy a present for someone just because everyone else says I have to. If someone is important to me, and I want to express my liking for him or her with a gift, then I will do so. It doesn't matter if it is December, August or March.

I feel "overloaded" when I see pages and pages of advertisements. There is undoubtedly an incalculable amount of pressure on us to buy the right gift. I'm not sure if buying anything is the right gift. For kids, I may be wrong. Wouldn't it mean more though to make someone something special? It seems that buying a gift only gives in to the consumerism companies want.

Everything around us is marketed so that we will spend money. For instance, when we are in bars or nightclubs, the colour of paint on the wall is specifically selected to make the consumer feel a certain way.

When I go to the bathroom I am forced to stare at an advertisement placed above the urinal. The planet is built around money. Why not avoid the recurrence of another "plastic Christmas" and take the time, not money, to make someone a gift?

If your receiver doesn't appreciate the gift, it only means that he or she doesn't appreciate your actions (taking the time out of your schedule to make the gift), only your results (how "nice" the gift is).

What happened to the phrase "It's the thought that counts."

Where is the thought in your wallet or credit card? If it is better to give than to receive, then give from your heart.

"Have a relaxing, safe and enjoyable break. We look forward to seeing you next term."

Best Wishes (L to R) Bonnie Rose, Vice-president Academic, Martha Casson, Vice-president, Enterprise & Student Services, Steve Hudson, Vice-president, Corporate Services, and Beth Weldon, Chief Information Officer

STOCKINGS ARE HUNG

Celebrating with loved ones important at Christmas

By RACHEL MONTOUR
Staff Writer

Three disabled people say celebrating with their family at Christmas time is important to them.

Julie Grand, 22, of Welland, is in her second year of the Art and Design Fundamentals — Graphic Design Production program at Niagara College's Welland campus.

"I think Christmas is a great opportunity to get together with family and friends. When I am with family and friends, it makes me realize how lucky I am to have the things I have, like my family. I am grateful to have a large family to celebrate Christmas with."

She says she is close to her family and she "loves" them.

"We usually get together at a family member's house and have dinner."

She says when her family gathers there are about 25 people. There are six people in her immediate family. She has two sisters and one brother.

"I don't ask for a lot of presents but I like being surprised. Whatever I get I am happy about. It doesn't matter whether the gift is big or small.

"I consider myself fortunate to have my family to share the holiday season. I love celebrating Christmas. I like snow on Christmas. It makes it feel more like Christmas."

Julie Grand (left) and Trina Washington are getting into the Christmas spirit.

Photo by Rachel Montour

Jodie St. John, 20, of Bethany, Ont., a town near Peterborough, is in the Computer Programmer and Computer Programmer/Analyst (Co-op) program at Niagara College's Welland campus.

"Christmas means getting together with family and having a good time," she says. "Instead of giving presents, we get together and make crafts. We go to church on Christmas Eve and celebrate the birth of Christ.

"I am growing up so I get only a few gifts. I like the gifts I get." He says that presents don't matter. "It is the idea that counts."

Trina Washington, of Niagara Falls, is a counsellor in the Centre for Students with Disabilities.

"Christmas is a time for me to remember and reflect on the moments and times that give me joy," says Washington. "For example, nine years ago we adopted our son David. It had the Christmas magic of having a dream come true. We celebrated with all of our family and friends. It was the greatest gift I have ever been given."

She says Christmas is a time of celebration with family and friends and remembering the religious and spiritual significance.

"We love to make Christmas special for our family and friends. We always try to do something for others, like donate presents for needy families."

Donations wanted

By RACHEL MONTOUR
Staff Writer

Donations are wanted.

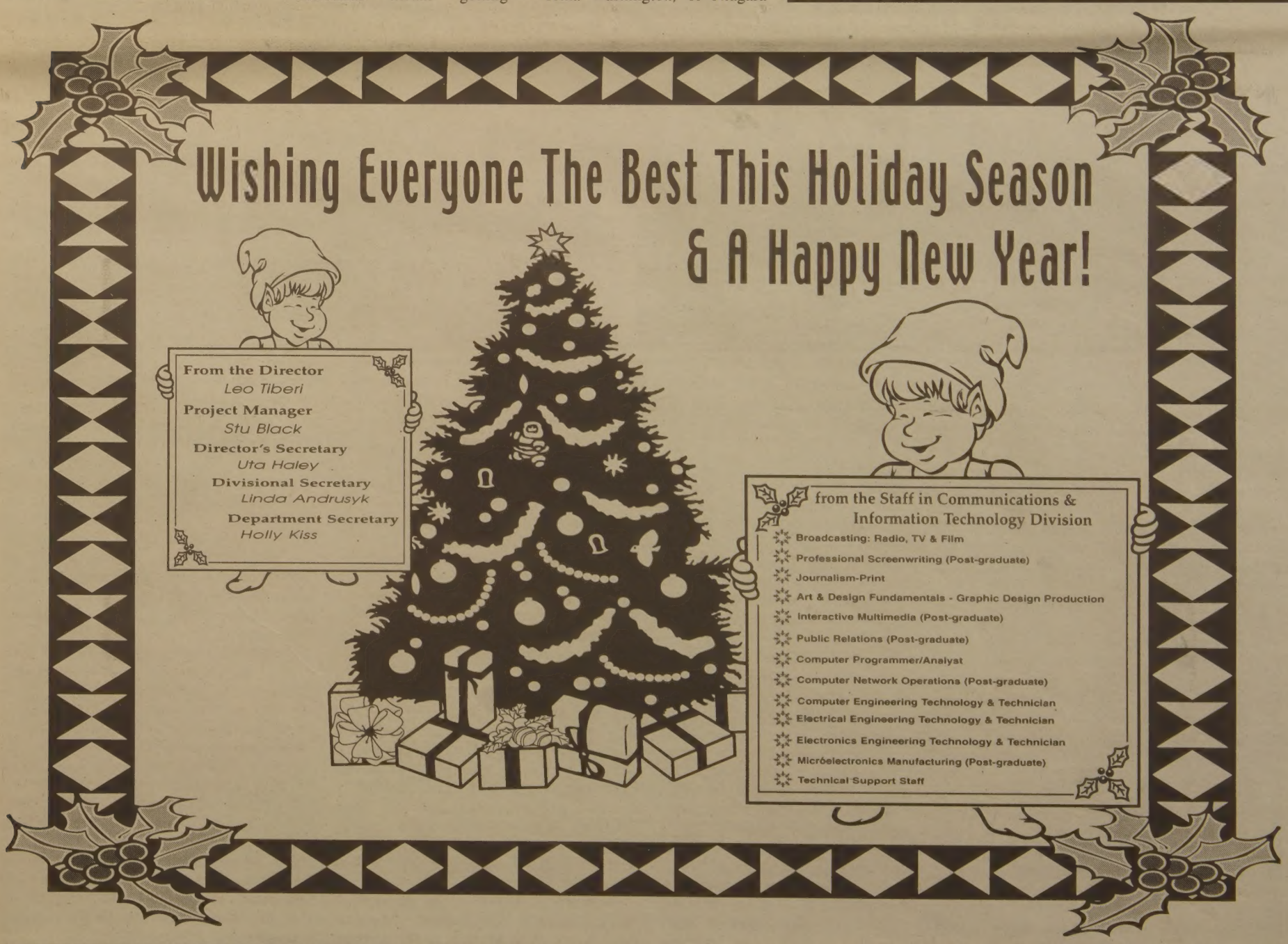
The residents of Tanguay Place in Welland are asking the community to donate items for a wish list. Items include the following: a new stereo with CD radio and tape player, large fish aquarium, computer board games like Rumoli, Trouble, Clue and Monopoly, beach balls, Nurf toys, croquet, videos, television trays and musical instruments.

Tanguay Place is a residence that provides housing, support services and assistance with life skills for adults with physical disabilities. It is an independent living centre for adults with various physical disabilities. It opened in January 1987 and currently has 13 residents.

Darlene Bradnum, activities of daily living assistant at Tanguay Place, says the "residents want community support."

"It would be nice if the community could donate some of the items."

Anyone wishing to help is asked to contact Larry or Christine at (905) 788-1455 weekdays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Donations are welcome at anytime, but residents are asked to telephone Larry or Christine first before dropping off any donations.



SPREADING CHRISTMAS JOY

Giving needy children 'wonderful things'

By PAUL FINELLI
Staff Writer

Her eyes lit with joy as she related the story. Two years ago, at an African orphanage where her friends served, each child received a decorated shoebox of toys and other goodies at Christmas, bringing love, hope and cheer to their smiling faces.

Her face gleamed as she told how a married couple in one of the English classes she teaches in the Foundations Studies Department had confided their wish to prepare boxes in hopeful preparation of becoming parents one day.

Erika Church, a native of Fonthill, is an English professor to mainly construction and mechanical students in Niagara College's Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

When I mentioned her part in the gift drive at the Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake, she paused. Her voice softened, conveying her modesty and eagerness to divert the spotlight. It is the students, after all, who deserve most mention for their many gift collections, she said, with increasing awe in her voice. "They opened their hearts — absolutely generous!"

For the last three years, under her initiative, second- and third-year students and faculty, especially of the above program and courses, along with first-year students in a business law class this year, have helped make brighter the holidays and lives of millions of children worldwide.

The campaign, called Operation Christmas Child, may have officially ended this year on Nov. 18, but it is just one of many Christian relief and evangelism projects begun and run by Samaritan's Purse since 1970. Samaritan's Purse is a nondenominational evangelical Christian organization offering spiritual and physical aid to victims of war, poverty, natural disasters, famine and disease, while spreading the message of God's love through His son, Jesus Christ.

The organization had its start from Bob Pierce, an evangelist and journalist who travelled Asia after the Second World War. He visited people, including children suffering on Korea's Kojedo Island. He lectured in China where he met brave women sharing Christ's love while living poorly among lepers and orphans.

It was then his mission came to him. He resolved to find and aid other Christians caring for the poor and suffering in far corners of the world.

In the summer of 1973, Pierce met an adventurous young student from North Carolina named William Franklin Graham III. Evangelist Billy Graham's son accompanied Pierce in 1975 on various missions. In 1978, Pierce died of leukemia. A year-and-a-half later, the younger Graham became the president and chairman of the board of the still-young Samaritan's Purse.

The ministry has since seen massive growth, last year reaching more than 100 countries with almost $95 million in direct aid.

"Whether it's hunger, flood, war-related, Samaritan's Purse is there," said Church. "They've gone to Kosovo, they've gone into Mozambique, they've gone into Mexico, into India . . . They are in the places of dire need. They provide firstly food, shelter and clothing at no charge. They simply go in and ask what needs to be done and make that available.

"But at Christmas time, this is a very special time, and they go with this to give the impoverished children a very special Christmas gift. And so this shoebox gift (is) what's organized, and currently there are a number of countries throughout the world that respond: Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia.

"Last year, 2.3 million shoeboxes were distributed to children throughout the world. The shoeboxes went into Kosovo, into Mozambique, (and) the shoeboxes went into Mexico, various parts of Africa, and the Ukraine."

The number, in fact, is closer to three million, which is the organization's official total for the boxes it gathers in the donator countries, from which they go out to children in some 60 countries.

The rules and categories for individuals packing shoeboxes — any small box is actually acceptable — are clearly spelled out by the organization, Church said.

"There are some basic guidelines as to how to pack the boxes, and they suggest choosing from each of the four categories: toys — and of course those would be appropriate to the age group and to the gender; school supplies; hygiene items — toothbrush and toothpaste is very, very special of course; and under the category of other — hard candy, . . . lollipops, mints, flashlights with extra batteries. It's a great, great toy item . . . But they do discourage these items — anything that is war-related, anything that is perishable.

"Remember that some of these boxes are headed for countries where there is great upheaval. In the former Yugoslavia, it just would not (work) where they have lived with violence on an ongoing basis. Anything that is war-related (like) toy guns or knives," she continued with added emphasis in her final words, "would just be inappropriate."

Donors are able to choose whether they fill a box for a boy or a girl. They then decide the age and fill the box with appropriate items: two to four years old, five to nine years old and 10 to 14 years old.

Donors are strongly discouraged from placing photos or personal notes with their gift. A minimum $5 donation is requested to help defray shipping costs.

Church said her part in the Christmas drive arose through her church attendance a few years back. "I learned of this through our church. Our church (Faith Tabernacle) distributed hundreds of boxes into the community, as have other churches and elementary and high schools in the Welland area. I'm surprised at how many (elementary and high) schools."

As for Niagara College students, she said professor Jim Butko's first-year business law class was "very generous." She explained. "Many of them asked for their own box to fill, which is a considerable sacrifice because students are not known for their wealth."

She said anyone can fill a decorated box. "It costs very little to fill a box, particularly if one goes to the dollar store. And one can buy very, very reasonably priced items . . . for a fraction of the cost that you would find at any other store, and good quality items surprisingly enough too."

Church continued, her face effused with new joy, saying that they had run out of their provided shoeboxes to fill. "Some students have simply decorated the boxes. All that was needed was a shoebox and have the top and bottom separately wrapped and decorated. And all these boxes are going to be collected in our area . . . It's going to be sorted through to make sure that they, all of the items, are appropriate for that age group."

Church related some of the devastation that has come to her attention. "Many of these boxes go to Mexico, to the garbage dump children, those children who live with their families in garbage dumps. The garbage dump is their home. They scavenge whatever they can find in the garbage dump . . . So they are truly impoverished.

"In some of those countries, there's very little hope, particularly in Africa. There are many orphans, children who have been orphans because of genocide or who have been orphaned because of AIDS their parents have contracted, and so there's no one to raise them. I know of one orphanage in the Ukraine, for example, (where) they say they don't even tell the children it's Christmas if there is a shortage of food."

Returning to the Glendale campus, she added, "This is truly a light, this is truly a light, and I am profoundly overwhelmed by the generosity of the students." She said, in addition to the students in the programs already mentioned, she thanks professors Paul Campbell, Gilles Laroche, and Gary Dolche, as well as program co-ordinator Paul Weerdenburg.

In all, she later confirmed by phone to *Niagara News*, 77 boxes were collected by all the participants at the Glendale campus. Samaritan's Purse Canada has collected a record of 14,000 shoeboxes in the Niagara region this year.

While the drive is limited to the Glendale campus, Church conceded, as far as the Welland campus and Maid of the Mist campus in Niagara Falls goes, "I think it's quite possible in the future to expand it and to allow students from all programs to participate."

She also gave high praise to Samaritan's Purse and such endeavours as their Christmas project, of which, she said, she is happy and proud to be a part. "They're there simply to provide hope and joy at Christmas."

Anyone, Church said, regardless of religious background, can participate in the drive, for which donations can be sent year round to the national distributor in Calgary. "It's simply a matter of putting (a) box of wonderful, wonderful things in the hands of a child who hasn't seen, who hasn't experienced, that joy or hope of Christmas."

Grasping her hands tightly, she hunched over a table piled with some of the boxes going out to unfortunate children. She summed up the urgency of Samaritan's Purse and the public's involvement.

"So there's truly a need, and we're blessed to live in a very prosperous country. And with prosperity comes responsibility." She paused for a brief second before saying in deliberate speech, "When much is given, much is expected."

For more information on Operation Christmas Child, or the complete work of Samaritan's Purse, call 1-800-303-1269 or visit the Web site at http://www.samaritanspurse.org.

Erika Church, English professor and campaign organizer at Glendale (centre in front row), poses with her students in the Construction Engineering Technology — Architecture program, along with Paul Weerdenburg, program co-ordinator (far left in middle row), and instructor Gilles Laroche (second from left in middle row). In all, 77 decorated care packages have been collected at the Glendale campus to bring a little holiday joy to impoverished children worldwide, in such countries as Kosovo, India and Mozambique.

Photo by Paul Finelli

Christmas in Niagara

Looking for the right tree.

Cindy Rigg and Laureen Ventnor at the Welland campus Learning Resource Centre.

"Now that's a tree!"

Santa's little helpers are ready for Christmas

Searching Seaway Mall for the perfect present.

University of Western Ontario students enjoying Niagara's Festival of Lights.

Photos by Joël Herrington, Matt Watling and Aaron Yzerman

'TIS THE SEASON

Holidays are about giving, not receiving

By LAURA T. RICCIUTO
Staff Writer
Column

As the holidays quickly approach, it is important for us, especially the younger generation, to give thanks for what we have.

I know it's Christmas and we all have a special "wish list" of what we'd like to see under the brightlylit tree, but we are always being reminded of this: the holidays are a time for giving and not receiving.

The problem is that we've heard that saying so many times over the years, and we repeat it to others yet never practice what we preach.

This holiday season, do yourself a favour. Give. Give a little. Give a lot. Just give whatever it is you can spare.

I stumbled upon an Advent-Christmas Sharing Calendar featured in the *Niagara Falls Review* by columnist Suzanne Elston, original source unknown.

The calendar is designed to spur us to count our blessings during the holiday season.

So create your own advent-sharing collection box, simply get a small box and place it in your dining area. Monetary contributions should be added as follows:

Dec. 1 - Put 25 cents in the box for everyone in your family who had at least two meals this day. (The average Canadian eats five times as much as people in developing countries.)

Dec. 2 - Add two cents for every light bulb in your house.

Dec. 3 - Add up the number of years that your whole family has gone to school and add two cents for each year.

Dec. 4 - Add 10 cents for every hour that your television was on today.

Dec. 5 - Add two cents for every litre of gasoline that your gas tank holds.

Dec. 6 - For every can of pop in your house add two cents. (We discard 1,500 tonnes of steel every day in food and drink cans. Over a year, that's enough to steel to make 350,000 cars.)

Dec. 7 - Count all the pairs of shoes and boots in your house and add one cent for each pair.

Dec. 8 - If you have your own bedroom or office, add 25 cents.

Dec. 9 - Total the length of your house and add two cents for each foot.

Dec. 10 - Contribute 25 cents for every pet you own.

Dec. 11 - Add three cents for every electrical appliance you use today. Don't forget radios, televisions and computers.

Dec. 12 - For every room in your house that is carpeted add 10 cents.

Dec. 13 - Add 25 cents for every toy in your house, and don't forget to include video games.

Dec. 14 - Add one cent for every page of this newspaper. (Every day it takes 40,000 trees to supply newsprint for Canada's daily newspapers.)

Dec. 15 - If you or any member of your family has ever been vaccinated, add 25 cents per person.

Dec. 16 - For every electrical outlet in your house, add five cents.

Dec. 17 - If you have a clothes dryer, add 50 cents.

Dec. 18 - Add five cents for every pair of gloves you own.

Dec. 19 - If the clothes you are wearing have only belonged to you, add 25 cents.

Dec. 20 - If you have a bed of your own to sleep in, add 25 cents. (In Bombay, India, between 100,000 and 500,000 people rest their head on pavement every night.)

Dec. 21 - Add $1 if you own a VCR and $2 for every computer in your home.

Dec. 22 - For every glass of clean water that you drank today, add 10 cents. (Of the six billion people living on the planet today, 1.5 billion don't have access to adequate drinking water.)

Dec. 23 - Add 25 cents if you know the name of your doctor.

Dec. 24 - If you have more than one blanket on your bed, add 25 cents.

Dec. 25 - Add five cents for every serving of meat given in your house today.

Dec. 26 - If you didn't recycle your Christmas wrapping, add $1.

Dec. 27 - For every glassed window in your house, add five cents.

Dec. 28 - For each person in your house who earns more than 20 cents an hour, add 50 cents.

Dec. 29 - Add 25 cents for every fridge or freezer in your house.

Dec. 30 - For every book you have read or received this month, add 10 cents.

Dec. 31 - If you kept the water running while you brushed your teeth, add 25 cents.

Jan. 1 - Add five cents for every time you talked to someone on the telephone today.

Jan. 2 - For every can of food in your cupboard, add five cents.

Jan. 3 - If you have more than 10 items in your fridge, add two cents for every extra item.

Jan. 4 - Consider how fortunate you are. Then consider that in North America, one out of every four children under the age of six is living in poverty.

Jan. 5 - Sit down with your family and decide to whom you would like to donate the contents of your Advent-Sharing box.

Jan. 6 (The Epiphany) - Add up the contents of your collection, and then send a cheque to the charity of your choice.

There are hundreds of families in our region alone that aren't as fortunate as most of us.

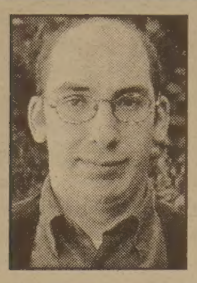
Although you may not get the DVD player, Playstation 2 or turbo-charged sports car you've been dreaming about, just be thankful for what is in front of your eyes.

Whether it's visiting family, being home for a holiday dinner or simply giving extra thanks to your mom for those clothes and Christmas stocking full of underwear and socks, be thankful.

The Niagara College
Student Administrative
Council
would like to wish all
students and staff
happy holidays.
See you in 2001
Glendale Student Council .. Maid of the Mist Student Council .. Welland Student Council

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus, but . . .



By PAUL FINELLI
Staff Writer
Column

It was 103 years ago, around this time of year, when an eight-year-old girl, Virginia O'Hanlan, asked *The New York Sun*'s editor, Francis P. Church, "Please, tell me the truth. Is there a Santa Claus?" This led to the now-famous response, which newspapers today across North America commonly reprint around this time.

Had Virginia written to an editor today, I imagine the printed response would go — should go — something like this:

Virginia, your little friends are on dope. They have been affected by the pop culture of a Britney Spears' age. They don't believe anything they can't gawk at in teen magazines, on film or on TV. All of their little minds — most adults' too — are led astray. In this great world, people are worker ants scurrying to make ends meet, as measured by wealth and products they can always acquire.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus.

He exists as certainly as Backstreet Boys, Mandy Moore and 'N Sync exist, and you know they abound and bring life to its greatest heights. Alas, how dreary this earth would be if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if we were all Virginias. There would be no toys, no jewelry . . . no precious things to make more enjoyable our existence. In short, the material wants that we since childhood seek to satisfy would be lost.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well as not believe in Pokémon. You might get your daddy to look in every chimney on Christmas Eve to catch the tricky Nick but even if some old fart in a red suit didn't come down, so what? Doesn't mean he exists, dear. Most real things in this world are what we can never see in person. Ever see Christina Aguilera straddle on your front lawn? It doesn't mean she's not real, right?

You tear a stuffed Pikachú doll apart to see all the white stuffing, but not what makes many zealous parents spend money to appease their spoiled and whiny little offspring, even when they'll lose interest the following year.

Only money, great items and resulting joy can push aside that curtain of want that drapes the view of an otherwise more-dreary world in which to live.

No Santa Claus? Thank God this capitalistic elf lives and lives . . . A thousand years from now, Virginia, no 10,000 years from now, he'll continue to make glad the hearts of children — and adults too.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Remembering traditions brings warm memories

By TERRI LYNN LeBLANC
Staff Writer
Column

Go out in the cold, cut down a tree, strap it to the roof of the car and drink hot chocolate to try to warm every inch of my body — that is what Christmas has been like for me the past few years. I guess you could say it has become a family tradition.

My family and I try to go as far north as possible to find a Christmas tree. Usually the weather is icy and freezing. However, for the past few years it has been pretty good, although the snow does give it a Christmas-like feeling.

After we get our tree, we travel home again and wait for the snow to melt from it. We decorate our house, testing all of the Christmas light bulbs to make sure they are still working from the year before.

After we finally get the tree up, usually with a struggle, my sisters and I get to decorate it while my parents sit back and watch. Every year I anticipate seeing who will be the first one to break an ornament or two.

I love Christmas around my house; being with family and keeping our traditions make it much more exciting.

This year I won't be around for that tradition because of a very important exam. I wish I could be, though, but I know when I go home it will still feel like all the other Christmases from the years before. I will get to be with all of the people who make the holiday special for me.

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DECK THE HALLS

Day after Christmas makes holidays not merry

By KEVIN HARTFORD
Staff Writer
Column

Picture a Christmas tree lying motionless and rotting away on someone's front lawn.

Picture a fake plastic Santa falling off a roof and being impaled on a wrought-iron fence. Picture a 12-pound coffee cake peeking at you from underneath the lid of a garbage can, and you start to understand why Boxing Day is the most depressing day of the year.

The buildup for Christmas starts the second summer ends. In September, people start giving serious thought to their Christmas shopping. In October, stores put their Halloween decorations up and have Halloween sales going on, but, really, they're thinking about Christmas.

In November, the relentless onslaught of Christmas displays and alleged "holiday bargains" begins, and poppy-clad denizens of the city wander aimlessly, trying to make sense of it all.

Then December rolls around. There are seemingly no empty parking spaces anywhere. People are elbowing each other in the face for Harry Potter merchandise.

Everywhere you go, your ears are assaulted with Yuletide carols prerecorded and played back on a store's sound system.

Then, before you know it, the cold, harsh reality of Boxing Day hits you like a slap in the face. Leftovers of that delicious turkey dinner you had on Christmas are now in Tupperware containers in your fridge. Your parents have decided to keep the Sega Dreamcast they bought you for themselves, and Santa won't be back for another 364 lonely days. It's enough to make you want to cry.

Boxing Day is good for one thing, though, and that is to show us what the true meaning of Christmas is: that life is nothing but a giant letdown.

Merry Christmas to all . . . I guess.

Celebration of new year differs from culture to culture

By CLINTON HAGGART
Staff Writer

If you haven't been successful with your new year's resolutions, try again.

Not all cultures consider Jan. 1 to be the beginning of the new year. The Chinese celebrate their new year in the spring.

It is a time for families to get together and have big dinners. There are parades with firecrackers, paper maché dragons and fireworks. The Chinese name the years after animals. It is the year of the dragon.

The Persian new year, Nowrooz, is also held in the spring. Families light bonfires and sing songs to chase away the winter and bad aspects of their lives.

The Persian new year is celebrated in Iran, Azerbaijan, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, parts of India and among the Kurds.

The Islamic year has 11 fewer days than the Greek year, so the new year is held at different times each year. This year it was held on Feb. 25.

Hindu people celebrate their new year at the end of October and the beginning of November. Diwali, the festival of lights, marks the end of the year. Hindu families place lanterns around their houses to welcome Lakshmi, goddess of wealth and prosperity. Toronto's first Diwali parade was held on Oct. 30.

Diwali is celebrated in India, Kenya, Thailand, Siam, Trinidad and Malaysia.

Celtic people celebrate Samhain, pronounced sow-en, which is also known as Ancestor Night or Feast of the Dead.

Changed to Halloween by the Catholic church, the feast was originally held on Oct. 31 because the veil between the land of the living and the dead was thinnest then. Celtic people would prepare feasts to honour their ancestors.

Cernunnos, god of the Underworld, would collect the souls of those who died during the year and take them to his kingdom before midnight, when the new year started.

The Celtic people were descendants of Indo-Europeans, thus explaining why the Hindu and Celtic people celebrate the new year at the same time.

Have a Safe & Happy Holiday,
from your friends at the Learning Resource Centre

Happy Holidays
from the staff of
Ventures - Employment and Training Services

Have a Wonderful Holiday
& We Wish One and All
A Healthy & Prosperous
New Year!
From your friends at
Employment Services
The Job Centre

Christmas Greetings!

From the Faculty, Staff & Administrators of the Foundation Studies Division and the School of General & Preparatory Studies

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

We should examine real meaning of Christmas

By BROOKE DREDGE
Staff Writer
Column

What do you do when you wake up Christmas morning to discover Santa hasn't come and you aren't getting anything this year?

For most, this thought has never crossed their minds, but there are many individuals in this world who don't get anything — no presents, no turkey dinner, no decorations. The phrase "Have a Merry Christmas" obviously doesn't apply to everyone.

How can we make the frowns disappear and tears dry for empty-handed children?

It will likely be through the efforts of organizations such as Senior Support Services, Meals-On-Wheels, Toys for Tots and various mall anchor stores such as Zellers and Wal-Mart. It isn't just organized groups that help the unfortunate, though. People within the community volunteer too.

Senior Support Services funds and equips families in the area with all the ingredients to make Christmas dinners for the elderly who can't get home to their families or who have no families. The volunteers make the meals and distribute them. Recipients receive the traditional main courses, dessert and enough leftovers for three days.

Meals-On-Wheels delivers entire Christmas meal to families who can't afford the extra costs of a special meal. In some cases, its drivers also deliver gifts and winter clothing.

Area shopping malls also participate. Most place a Christmas tree in a visible spot in the concourse and put tags on the tree with children's names, ages, clothes sizes and shoe sizes. Patrons select a name and buy that child a gift. It is all done anonymously with the only aim being that each child receive a gift Christmas morning.

I believed the whole idea of this holiday season was that of giving, not receiving. It's a blessing to put a smile on a child's face Christmas morning as the child tears through the paper on the presents. Kids behave all year round, or try to, in hopes that Santa will bring them everything on their wish lists. What of the children who pray for Santa to bring them something, only to get nothing. I ask you, is it fair?

The fondest memory I have is waking up Christmas morning and running downstairs to see how many presents were under the tree and how many had my name on them. I remember the joy in my parents' eyes as my siblings and I tore through the wrapping paper in anticipation of what was inside. To them it was the single most precious day of the year, knowing that we were not only grateful for the gifts, but the gesture and especially for each other.

I don't know what it's like to go without gifts or a plentiful meal on Christmas. As egotistical as it may sound, I hope I never do. It is a gift to someone to cook that person a Christmas feast, or buy Christmas presents for children who would otherwise get nothing. Isn't that enough reason to celebrate the season?

In one kind gesture, you are able to see what the real meaning behind the season is and why we celebrate it.

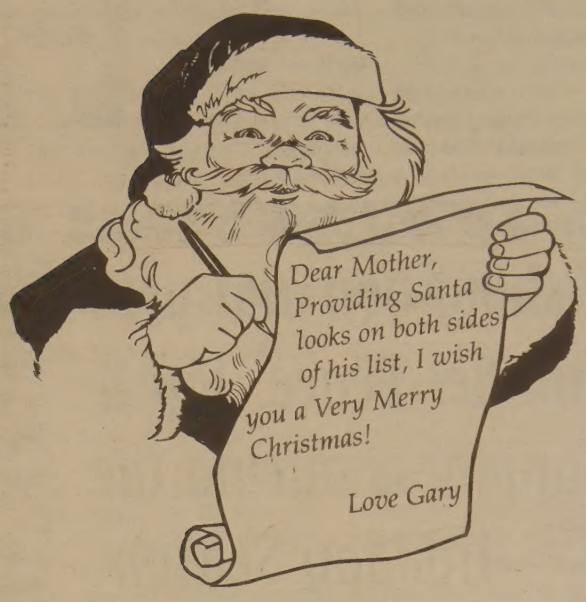
Santa's on his way

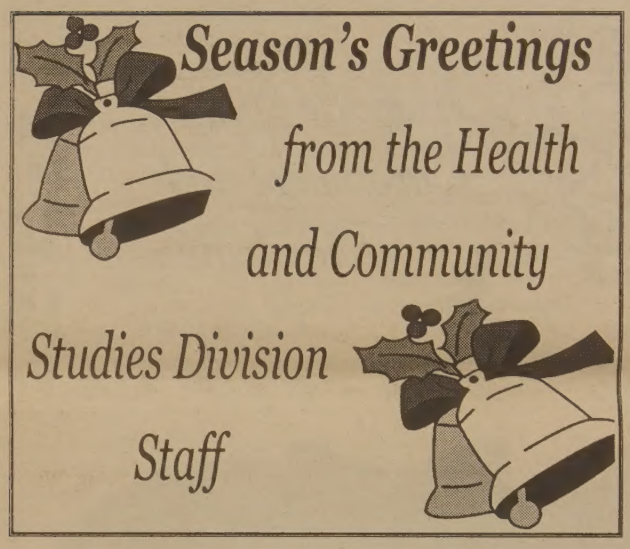
Students at Niagara College's Residence get ready to celebrate the holiday season.

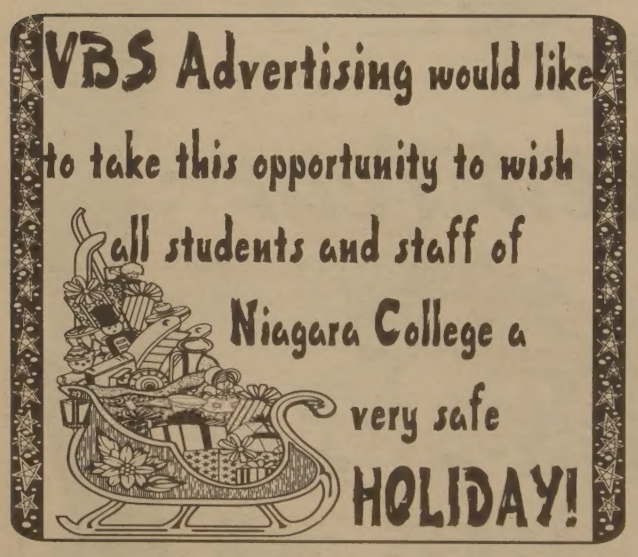
Photo by Terri Lynn LeBlanc

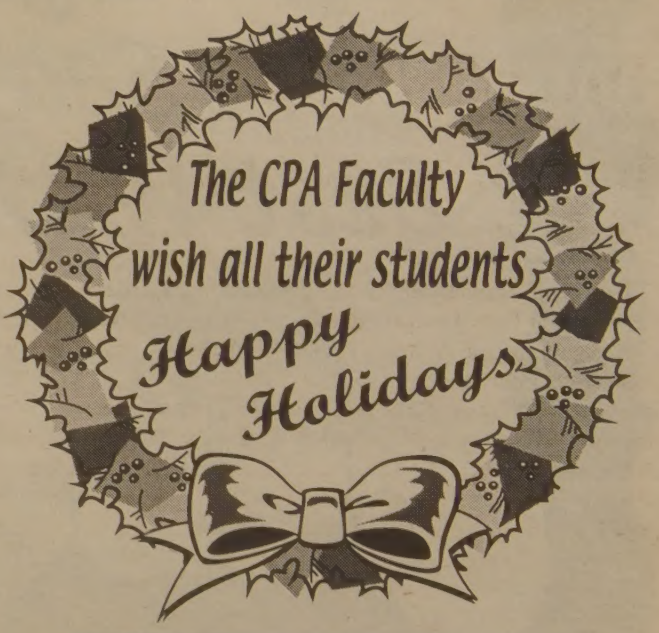
Wishing you and your families Peace, Joy & Happiness during the Holiday Season
From the Staff of Enrollment and Registration Services

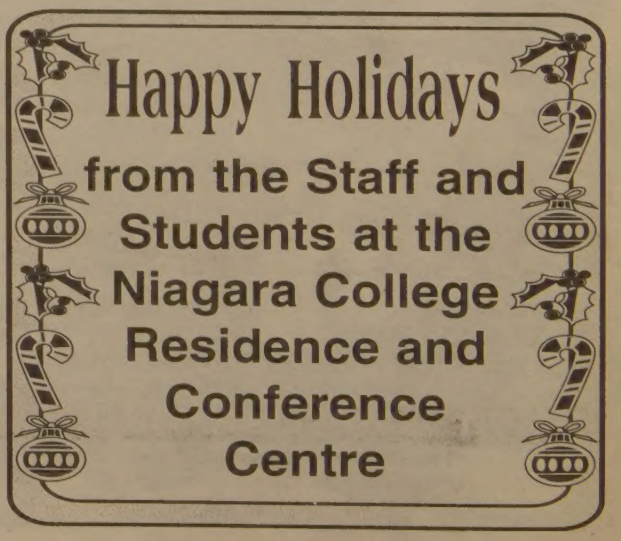
Season's Greetings






VBS Advertising would like to take this opportunity to wish all students and staff of Niagara College a very safe HOLIDAY!





Taking workshop boosts small business profits

By PAUL FINELLI
Staff Writer

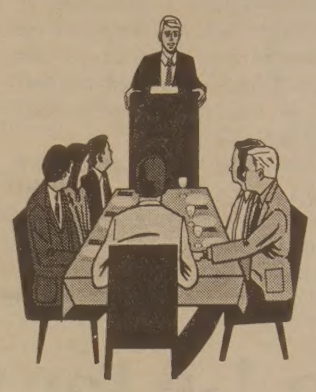
Going Global is the theme for workshops at Niagara College aimed at helping small businesses to increase their profits and recognition on the international market.

The three-part series is designed to help local businesses unhappy with their profits and prospects and whose owners want to know how to better market their products or services abroad.

The sessions are presented by Niagara College and Trade Niagara, in affiliation with the Forum for International Trade and Training (FITT) and sponsored by Human Resources Development Canada. (FITT is a Canadian trade organization providing support and official designation to those who have taken courses pertaining to international business.)

Tony Cirasuolo, a trade adviser with Trade Niagara, said while they have had some success in being able to offer workshops, which ran in four sets since a year-and-a-half ago, he admitted the turnout numbers may seem small, around 20, for the workshops held in a regular classroom.

"I've been networking, trying to get the word out more . . . contacting small businesses. I've sent letters to all of the banks. I have to be more pro-active in getting in touch with them." He added, "I'm hoping, with a little more networking with banks we



can increase the numbers."

The people, he continued, have often been the same faces throughout the slate of workshops. "It's pretty well the same numbers all the way through."

The first workshop was held on Sept. 30 and ran again on Nov. 4. It was run by Diane King, an export development officer with the Haldimand Norfolk Manufacturer's Association. Titled, An Introduction to International Trade, some of the various topics covered are The Global Economy, Is Exporting Right For Me? For My Company? and Legal Aspects of International Trade.

The second workshop was held on Oct. 14 and again on Nov. 18. It was run by Ray Guy, co-ordinator of the college's Business — International Business Management program. Titled, International Market Research, some of the various topics covered are The Role of Research in Market Entry, Identifying Opportunities and Using The Internet in Market Research.

The third workshop, held on Oct. 28, also ran again, under the title of International Marketing on Saturday, on Dec. 2. It was run by Brian Cox, a trade adviser with Trade Niagara. Among the topics discussed were Principles of Marketing, Challenges of International Marketing and Selling in Foreign Markets.

The workshops, for which seating is limited, are run out of the Corporate Training Room (W212) in the Corporate Training Centre, on the second floor of the main building in the Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The number to call for more information, such as when the next series might be run, is (905) 641-2252 Ext. 4435.

Cirasuolo did caution, "It would be better to sign up before the series starts, but we're offering them continually." With a smile, the trade adviser added, "There might be another workshop series in the new year. There's been rumour there's going to be a four-part series."

International students' voice enjoys learning about different cultures

By CLINTON HAGGART
Staff Writer

Few people actually enjoy going to work, but Patty Faragalli does.

Faragalli, 54, of Welland, is the assistant international student adviser for Niagara College. She receives all the general inquiries from students abroad who are interested in attending classes here. "I correspond with them with e-mail or regular mail."

Faragalli has been employed with Niagara College since 1977.

She has been the admissions and liaison officer, a position that required her to help people decide if they want to come to the college.

She spent time as the production officer in the marketing department, but retired several years ago.

Faragalli works part time because she says she wants to spend more time with her grandson, Jordan, three-and-a-half.

Faragalli works with Sean Coote, the international student adviser. She says, "He is a fountain of knowledge and he's an asset to the college."

Faragalli says there isn't a part of her job that she doesn't enjoy. She says she really likes learning about all the different cultures.

"I'm a social person and I enjoy coming to work each day."

PATTY FARAGALLI

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The Niagara News will return Jan. 19, 2001

College raises over $29,000 for United Way

By KEVIN HARTFORD
Staff Writer

As of Nov. 25, the United Way campaign has raised $806,312, which is 81 per cent of its $1 million goal.

Welland has reached 93 per cent of its $625,000 target by pulling in $579,953. Pelham's is at 91 per cent of its $30,000 goal with $27,183. Port Colborne and Wainfleet have banked 45 per cent of their $100,000 goal by raising $44,990.

"There'll still be campaigns winding up right until the end of December and into the first of January," says Sharon Svob, campaign and marketing director of the United Way of South Niagara. "There'll still be dollars coming in. We're pretty well running on track, according to last year's and other years' campaigns."

There are 62 accounts in what the United Way calls the Welland Majors Division and the Port Colborne Industrial Division, and only nine are complete.

"We'll start to see some huge leaps as campaigns wind up and bring their dollars in because of those 50 or so companies, as well as there are individual dollars still coming in and certainly some organizations that send us money aren't (included) in that group."

Svob calls the results of Niagara College's United Way campaign "absolutely fantastic. They set an increased goal (for dollars) and an increased goal for participation and they exceeded both of those goals (by) just running a very good campaign, informing people and the donors just came through. It shows the work over the last several years — it's never just one year — the work over the last several years of informing potential donors."

The college's campaign earned more than $29,000, an increase of over 23 per cent from last year's take.

A United Way victory dinner was held at the Croatian National Home on Broadway Avenue in Welland on Dec. 5, and provided "an opportunity for the United Way to recognize volunteers."

As for what happens in the United Way when the campaign ends, Svob says, "The allocations process is just winding up, and that process is a group of volunteers that determine where the dollars are distributed, what agencies will be receiving funding this year. We have some special project dollars, dollars that were earmarked specifically by donors to go to a certain pool, and there are some one-time projects to allocate dollars to as well."

The United Way looks at submissions made by agencies seeking funding to determine where the money goes. "Agencies submit a budget for each program. It's not just an agency budget, it's 'I want x number of dollars for this program and I want so much for this program. One agency may have four or five programs that they submit for."

Dollars are distributed by "priority of need," Svob says. "We look at food, clothing and shelter. Necessities first, then you kind of go down line. We also look at financial notes and our accountability as well as the number of people served (by an agency) or the service they provide to their community."

The United Way receives a cheque from Niagara College for $29,082.50. From the left are Dan Patterson, Niagara College president, Jill Cappa, executive director of United Way of South Niagara, Rena Posteraro, Niagara College campaign co-chair, Frank Adamson, United Way of South Niagara general campaign chair, and Darrell Neufeld, Niagara College campaign co-chair.

Photo by Kevin Hartford

SPORTS

Knights defeat Lambton at home 85-72

By AARON WILSON
Staff Writer

The Niagara Knights men's basketball team is in a tie for first place in West Region with Lambton, Fanshawe and St. Clair Colleges. St. Clair College is in Windsor.

They earned a two-game winning streak by defeating the Lambton Tigers of Sarnia on Dec. 1. Niagara defeated Redeemer College, of Ancaster, 81-56 on Nov. 24 to notch the initial win.

Niagara picked up the its first road win at Redeemer and shook the cobwebs off from the Fanshawe game in London on Nov. 21. Ernell Ellis, small forward, led the Knights against Redeemer with 18 points.

The Knights came out strong in the first half of the Lambton game and continued their momentum, winning 85-72 at home.

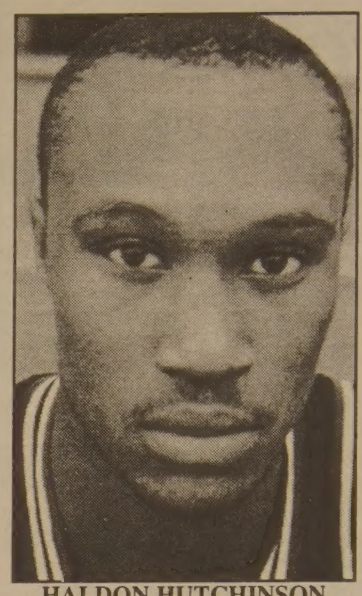
Niagara played solid defence, and let their transition game take over. The Knights capitalized on every turnover.

Coach Ralph Nero says, "This was a must win," and he was happy with the way his team performed.

"It often is the case against another transition team. We broke them down and outran them," says Nero.

Ellis led the Knights in scoring with a season high 28 points, which now puts his average at 21 points per game.

Ellis says he liked the way the team played the transition game. "We practiced it and practiced it, came out and kept doing it."



HALDON HUTCHINSON

Haldon Hutchinson, Niagara's captain, added 20 points. Hutchinson hit five free throws in the last minute and a half.

"Coach got us working on free throws in practice, and it paid off."

Matt Roberts, centre, scored a double-double, racking 10 points and taking down 13 rebounds.

Roberts says the Knights capitalized on the other team's mistakes. "Hutch did a good job pushing the ball, and everyone filled their lanes well."

Curtis Francis, shooting guard, had a solid game with 15 points. Francis says the Knights exploited some mismatches, and "then the team defence picked it up."

Some more good news for the Knights is LaVar Morgan, power forward, dressed in the game, but didn't play. His ankle is still not 100 per cent. He took to the court in an exhibition game Dec. 5 against Georgian College, of Barrie, in which the Knights took a 69-51 victory. Morgan's injury will likely be completely healed for the next home game, an exhibition match, on Dec. 12 against George Brown College, of Toronto.

The Niagara Knights next play in the Niagara College Invitational tournament on Dec. 15 and 16. They have invited three other college teams still unidentified at press time.

Game times are 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. on Dec.15, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. on Dec.16 at the gym in the Mackenzie building on the Welland campus.

Women's basketball team falls to 1-6 for the season

Niagara plays good first half against Georgian, but lacks intensity in second, and falls to defeat

By AARON WILSON
Staff Writer

"It was a successful loss." That was the sentiment from coach Georgie Groat after the Niagara Knights women's basketball team had a losing 69-48 night at Georgian College.

The team faced the Georgian Grizzlies, from Barrie, on Dec. 5. Niagara played an exciting first half, trailing by a tight 27-26, but lost the game in the second half.

Jana Douglas, forward, scored 17 points to lead the Knights. "We had more skills, but they were more disciplined," she said.

Carrie Stratford, forward, collected nine points. "I think we started coming together as a team, but we needed a little more intensity."

Groat says, "The most frustrating thing is this team has the potential to become one of the top teams. We just can't put together two good halves."

The Niagara Knights women's team lost 88-38 to undefeated Humber on Dec. 2 at home. The two losses give the Knights a 1-6 record.

Inaccurate foul shooting hurt the Knights, as did an inability to convert on good defensive plays.

Although the team was down by 21 points in the second half, Niagara continued to hustle for every ball. "That is one thing we try to instill to the team. No matter if we're up by 50 or down by 50, execute and work hard," says Groat.

Candace Oxford, captain for the Niagara Knights, lays one in against Humber. **Photo by Aaron Wilson**

Tasha Warwick, guard, led the Knights in scoring with 11 points. "We were beating ourselves, missing easy shots, lay-ups, and jumpers weren't going in. It was very frustrating," says Warwick.

Groat says, in the last five years, Humber has been known as a solid team. "Just the name intimidates, which was part of it. Their forwards were much bigger and athletic, but I don't think they are 50 points better."

Niagara next plays two exhibition games, one on the road. The Knights play at Niagara Community College, in Lewiston, N.Y., on Dec. 16 at 6 p.m. They face Mercyhurst College, from outside Buffalo, N.Y., Dec. 19 at 3 p.m. in the gym of the Mackenzie building at the Welland campus.

After the two exhibition games, the women's basketball team takes a holiday break. They open 2001 at home on Jan. 13 against George Brown College, of Toronto. Tip-off is at 4 p.m. in the gym.

Rugby player takes on challenge of 20 inquisitive questions

Nova Scotia native brought experience to Niagara College team

By JOEL D. HERRINGTON
Staff Writer

Graham Alexander Parker, 24, is from Nova Scotia.

This year, he played on Niagara College's rugby team and supplied some much-needed experience and talent. Parker has played at the University of Pennsylvania State and the University of British Columbia.

Parker is in the General Arts and Science program here at the college.

With all this travelling, Parker says it has been difficult to maintain good friendships. The *Niagara News* has presented him with a whole new level of difficulty: Our 20 questions.

Q. What's your favourite sport?

A. Rugby.

Q. What's your favourite college team?

A. The Penn State Nittany Lions.

Q What's your favourite meal?

A. Haggis. It's sheep stomach filled with oatmeal.

Q. If you were an animal, which one would you be?

A. Koala. They're soft and cuddly, but aggressive in nature.

Q. If you were offered $1 million or a beautiful super-model to marry and love you, which one would you choose?

A. The $1 million.

Q. What's your goal for the future?

A. To become the "Patch Adams" of medicine.

Q. What's your most embarrassing moment?

A. When I was with the Canadian Junior Nationals team, I had to strip naked in front of three top senators, at State Parliament in Washington, D.C. It was my initiation for the rugby team during the Cherry Blossom Festival.

Q. Out of every college and university you've attended, which one do you like the most?

A. University of British Columbia.

Q. Which one do you like the least?

A. Niagara.

Q. What's your favourite car?

A. The Porsche 911 Twin Turbo.

Q. If you could change something that happened in your life, what would it be?

A. I would have taken more time to discover who I am and where I'm going, instead of always moving from place to place. I didn't have time to do that with all this travel.

Q. If you could change something about yourself, what would it be?

A. I'd like to be more tolerant towards stupidity.

Q. What's your favourite television show?

A. Titus.

Q. What's your favourite brand name for clothes?

A. Gap. (Which may also stand for Graham Alexander Parker?)

Q. Who is your favourite movie star?

A. Quentin Tarantino.

Q. What is the most memorable moment of your life?

A. Playing national junior and senior rugby.

Q. What's your favourite beer?

A. Guinness.

Q. If you were a drug, which one would you be?

A. Ecstasy.

Q. If you could make love to any woman in this world, who would it be?

A. My girlfriend.

Q. What would you do with $1 million?

A. I'd buy $1 million worth of beer and make money off the empties.

BMX biking: more lifestyle than hobby

By KRISTIN COLLVER
Staff Writer

Is it a trend, an image, a lifestyle or a form of rebellion?

For Kevin Grice, 24, of Niagara Falls, Ont., BMX biking means all of that and a whole lot more.

"BMX biking is everything," said Grice. "In some way or another, everything in my life is connected to biking. I've developed an interest in photography from having my picture taken while street biking. My grades in school reflected on how much time I spent riding my bike, when I should have been studying."

With BMX biking comes a lot of sacrifice, especially with your body. "My health is almost directly connected to riding. I get hurt at least once a week. I've had everything from knee injuries, back surgery, concussions and broken ribs, to bumps, bruises and cuts stitched shut. I don't mind though. Chicks dig scars," said Grice.

"I started to really get interested in it when I was about 11. I know this is going to sound corny but what got me into it was a movie I saw about BMX biking called Rad. After seeing that, I took my bike I had gotten for Christmas. It was a Raleigh BMX, metallic red with yellow snake belly tires," said Grice. "I was the kid who would try almost anything on my bike. My friends would dare me to try something and I would, so I got the nickname 'Krazy.'"

"I have a little problem with zoning out. Everything I look at, I stop and think on whether I can jump it or whether I can grind it. I live in Niagara Falls and the scene here is pretty small, but all of the riders are awesome in their own way. Everyone gets along and I think that's really important.

BMX biking is a growing sport as Kevin Grice, 24, of Niagara Falls, shows.

Photo by Kristin Collver

"In some of the bigger scenes, like in Lockport (N.Y.), I've noticed that there is a lot of trash talking that goes on among those riders," Grice said.

Grice participated in some amateur bike competitions, racing in several heats, with up to 200 riders in a competition.

"I was all wired, so excited to be there. I was 16 and I had made it past the qualifying round, which meant I could go on and continue to compete. It was the Maxis Tire Competition in Lockport, N.Y. I went on to do two rounds but that was as far as I could make it," Grice said about the first time he was in a competition.

About a year later Grice began being sponsored by an American company called Finish Line, which made greases and oils for bikes. "Daniel Wright was the guy I remember. He was cool.

"When I first joined up with them they were still a fairly new company. Basically the way it worked out was, I would wear the jersey they wanted me to and use their products on my bike, and if I broke a part on my bike I would get 75 per cent off it (the cost) and they would also pay my entrance fee into the competitions," said Grice.

Some of the top bikers in the sport today include Dave Mirra, Matt Hofman and Fuzzy Hall. Grice said they are his role models.

"Sometimes I use it as an escape, riding to clear my head and think. Other times, I just ride to ride," Grice said.

"As far as girls are concerned, most don't really understand why I like to bike. Around here they only care about what car you drive, what school you go to or where you work. There's always a couple that are there when I'm busting a trick, but for the most part they think it's cool to watch, but then that's it. The only chicks that really understand and appreciate BMX biking are the turbo sluts (slang term used to describe female bikers).

"Don't get me wrong. Girls are great, but personally I would rather be out riding than worrying about trying to get laid," said Grice.

"My bike is like a drug. It's too addicting. I'd be lost without it. To me, biking is everything."

Men's volleyball team rolling to victory

By JOEL D. HERRINGTON
Staff Writer

The Niagara Knights men's volleyball team just keeps rolling on its victory sweep. Niagara leads the West Region with 341 offensive points and 18 games won.

Niagara defeated North Bay's Canadore College and Nipissing University in that city for the second time this season on Nov. 24 and 25.

During the weekend of Nov. 10, Niagara battled the two teams and won easily. The results were just as positive this time around.

Against Canadore, the Knights swept the match in three straight games. The scores were 25-20, 25-19 and 25-23.

As for the results versus Nipissing, it took all five games to complete the two-match sweep. After winning the first game 25-18, the Knights lost the next two 25-20 and 25-23. In game four, Niagara was 25 points away from its first loss of the season. Although the Nipissing Lakers are a university team, the university has only about 1,800 full-time students. This explains why Nipissing competes against colleges and not other universities with 10,000 to 20,000 students.

With their backs glued to the wall, Niagara came through in the clutch with a 25-9 victory in game four and a 15-9 triumph in game five.

The defending Ontario Colleges Athletic Association champions are now 7-0. Students had an opportunity to see them in action on Dec. 5 when Niagara faced Ancaster's Redeemer Royals at home, in the Mackenzie building. The Knights easily pounded the Royals in three games. The scores were 25-18, 25-17 and 25-19.

The Niagara College women's volleyball team also played two matches during the weekend of Nov. 24. Coach Carolyn Welden's team suffered its second and third loss of the 2000-2001 campaign. Following a three-game sweep against Nipissing, the Knights fell to Canadore in five close games. The Panthers won the first two 27-25 and 25-19, but Niagara rebounded with a 25-21 and 26-24 victory in games three and four. The fifth and final game was close as well, but Canadore prevailed with a 15-12 win.

On the positive side, last year's Female Athlete of the Year, Diane Vandenhoven, is ranked sixth in the West Region with an average of 3.3 points per game (ppg). Volleyball fans had a chance to see the Knights play Redeemer on Dec. 5 at the Welland campus. They prevailed with scores of 25-21, 22-25, 25-18 and 25-16

For the men's team, Graeme Gaunt and Josh Gunnell are ranked second and third in the West Region, averaging 4.5 and 4.0 ppg respectively.

High school teacher assists in college basketball

By AARON WILSON
Staff Writer

Mike Beccaria, of Welland, assistant coach for the Niagara College men's basketball team, also teaches at the oldest school in the province.

Beccaria, 45, teaches religion at Notre Dame High School in Welland, a school of which he is a graduate. "It's going very well. There is a great atmosphere," at Niagara, he recently remarked.

Beccaria, a 21-year teacher, has been part of the faculty at Notre Dame for 12 years.

He graduated from the University of Western Ontario in London, Ont., with honours in physical education, then went to teachers' college at Brock University in St. Catharines, graduating in 1979.

Beccaria said when he began teaching he ventured to Alberta to find a job. "There was nothing here. We all had to go west, so my wife and I moved to Alberta."

Beccaria's wife, Mary Jane, also teaches. They began their classroom careers at the same time in 1979, having married in 1977. Mary Jane teaches Grade 1 at St. Augusta School in Welland.

"It was a fantastic system of education, very high standards," he said about his time in Alberta.

He recalls it was a good place to be a young teacher. "They had lots of money in the province and a good budget for phys ed."

Beccaria said the school had Olympic-style gymnastic equipment. He said while there teaching physical education, he coached every sport possible. "It was hard work. You had to coach virtually everything. Of course, my favourite was basketball."

Coach Mike Beccaria is seen here giving advice to Niagara Knights starter Curtis Francis.

Photo by Aaron Wilson

Beccaria said he enjoyed his experience in Canada's western province. "It was right at the end of the oil boom and just before the government made all those cutbacks."

Beccaria said his favourite musicians are the Beatles. He explained what he liked about them. "It was their timing, and they were really innovative."

He said his favourite sport is basketball and his favourite team is the Los Angeles Lakers. Topping his star players roster when he was younger were Jerry West and Elgin Baylor.

He said his other favourite sport is golf.

"I'm a lot more patient than I used to be." Beccaria, a lefty, said. "My favourite golfer is Mike Weir because he is Canadian and he is left handed."

Beccaria said he idolizes all the coaches he played for. "I always wanted to be a coach, and I respect all the coaches I played for."

NEEDLES AND PENS

Health risks involved in tattooing, body piercing

By TERRI LYNN LeBLANC
Staff Writer

Imagine being bent over a chair with your pants pulled half way down, the door wide open; anyone who walks by can see everything. There's a man sitting behind you, staring at your delicate skin just waiting to take the first jab with the needle.

Do you go through with it? Have you thought of all the health risks? Do you know if the man sitting behind has any idea of what he is doing? Is he using a clean needle? The answers are up to you.

Tattooing and body piercing are a trend among young adults. Is it more for the look, or is it just to be different and to rebel, so you go through with the pain?

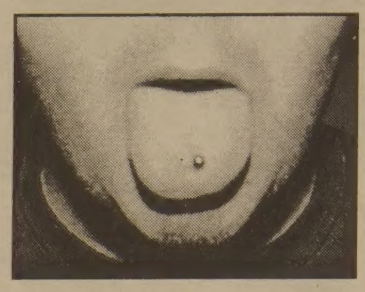
Tattooing is done by pricking small holes in the body with a needle that has been dipped in pigments with natural colours.

Tattooists will not perform their services on anyone under the influence of drugs or alcohol. This assures the tattooist's customers know exactly what they are getting themselves into when they sit in the chair.

Matt Carson, 22, of London, Ont., says he has a tattoo with two Canadian flags on poles that are crossed and "waving in the wind" on his right shoulder.

Carson says there are no health risks he knows of, but there might be emotional ones. "People tattoo their body for the hell of it, and then 10 to 20 years later they wished they never had it."

Carson says he "plans on turning the poles into lacrosse sticks. I am Canadian and proud of it."



Most body piercings are done with a needle. A piercing gun is used for ear lobes and should not be used for body piercing because the guns can't be sterilized.

"There is no feeling like a needle through your tongue," says Brandon Schram, 22, of Chatham, Ont.

He has two piercings, one in his tongue, the other in his eyebrow. He says he doesn't think there are any major health risks in body piercing "as long as you go to a professional."

Schram says, "I got them (the piercings) because the eyebrow ring looked cool and I thought 'why not?' and the tongue ring was for fun and it was only $25, so I thought I would try it."

Tattoos and body piercings can look good and may not cost much, but there are health risks one should be concerned about.

Unsterile tattooing and piercing needles can spread serious infection, hepatitis, tetanus, yeast and HIV.

Getting nipple piercings can cause infection or problems if a woman wants to breast-feed her baby. Sometimes the body may reject the jewelry, an effect which can cause pain and infection.

If you're considering a piercing or a tattoo, make sure to pick a good place to go, the person who is doing the "job" has clean needles and hands, and you're really sure you're ready to put that hole or design on your body. Removal of tattoos is expensive.

Librarians try to be helpful to as many students as possible

By TARA FORD
Staff Writer

Librarians aren't as "strict or grouchy" as students may think, says Sue Bartlett, library technician at the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) at Niagara College's Welland campus.

Bartlett says students sometimes see the librarians as strict because the "students have certain expectations," but don't understand all the processes librarians go through.

"We try to be accommodating," but when a student comes in wanting a certain resource right away, sometimes the LRC just doesn't have it on hand, says Bartlett.

The LRC tries to keep a policy of "fairness to all, but with a limited number of resources."

Certain audio-visual equipment is expensive and limited in number, so students need to book the equipment in advance.

The strict operating hours in the library are set because there doesn't seem to be "a big demand" for the LRC to be open later, she says. The LRC at the Welland campus is open Monday to Thursday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. The LRC is not open Saturdays.

Bartlett says a student card is needed to protect students. It "validates" who you are so that students can take out resources, she says, adding, when students don't have their card, students are "simply" not allowed to take anything out.

The LRC tries to keep a policy of 'fairness to all but with a limited number of resources'

Food and drink are another issue, she says. It's not that "we don't want you to eat lunch," but there are more appropriate places to do so, she says, adding, having food and drink in the library is hazardous to materials.

Bartlett says the LRC is looking at putting a suggestion box in the library for students who would like to give their views. She says the LRC staff is "always interested and open" to new ideas.

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ON THE ROAD

People faint in the path of the Torture King

By RYAN McLAUGHLIN
Staff Writer

One meat cleaver, three razor-sharp skewers, four evenly spaced swords, an uncountable number of nails and shards of glass, and only a few drops of blood — the Torture King was a hit.

After Hours, the Niagara College Welland campus pub, had no seats available by the time Zamora, the Torture King, took the stage.

Shortly after 10 p.m. the lights dimmed, the music went from hard beats to carny tunes, and Zamora began with the "human Olympic torch" act. Using torches doused in gasoline, Zamora would take the flame into his mouth and using his tongue, he would pass the fire onto a waiting torch.

After this brief demonstration, he introduced his co-performer, Slymenstra Hyman, who showed the crowd that she was very into whips. Slymenstra, who performs with the band GWAR, took volunteers from the audience and asked them to simply hold a lit cigarette in their mouths while she used her bullwhip to remove them.

Lisa Wayda, a 19-year-old in the Early Childhood Education program at Niagara, was one of the fortunate volunteers. She said it was "scary," adding, "I was really nervous, but felt relieved when she hit it."

Even after Slymenstra made a few minor errors with the whip later in the demonstration, Wayda said she would do it again now that she knew Slymenstra could do it.

Zamora then returned to the stage to demonstrate his ability to block out pain by walking barefoot on freshly broken glass. Even this was not enough for the Torture King. He proceeded to lie down on the glass, and had a volunteer jump on him to prove that his self-hypnosis and meditation could block out the pain and prevent the shards from puncturing his skin.

The act continued with Zamora and Slymenstra tag teaming the stage. At one point Zamora took a working light bulb, broke it on the stage and consumed it, much to the amazement of the crowd. "That's got to be a pain in the ass to digest," said audience member Andrea Stefanik, emphasizing the pun.

Filling the bar with flames, electricity, a strip tease and a melodious, bluesy song about masturbation, Slymenstra won grand applause. Kirk Schilling, 21, has worked the door for the last two years the show has appeared at Niagara College and said, "It's kind of a cool change with (Slymenstra)." Asked what he thought about the show, he said, "It's cool, man. I just think it's weird," adding, "We didn't think there'd be a good turnout, but it is a great one!"

Slymenstra Hyman demonstrates her singing abilities.

Photo by Ryan McLaughlin

"At first I thought the show was going to be tacky, but as it went on . . . I was very impressed, and a bit nauseated," said Stefanik.

Tracy Davis, of the Correctional Worker program, said, "It's entertaining. I'm a little skeptical, but (it's) very entertaining."

Zamora has been featured on Guinness World Records, Ripley's Believe it or Not!, 48 Hours, Real TV and The Discovery Channel. He said that after the Niagara College show they will drive through the night for a show in Quebec City. From there he and Slymenstra are off to Montreal and then back to Ontario to do a show in Toronto.

Zamora, the Torture King, makes the audience cringe as he pulls a string from his stomach and decorates it.

Photo by Ryan McLaughlin

When asked how they felt about the After Hours patrons, Slymenstra and Zamora agreed it was a "good crowd." Slymenstra added "especially for a Monday night."

The Weekend gets everyone smiling in After Hours pub

By STEPHEN D'ORAZIO
Staff Writer

Fresh off opening for southern California's punk rock trio Green Day at the Warehouse in Toronto, The Weekend came to rock Niagara College.

The London, Ont.-based band put on a great show, despite the fact that Andrea Wasse, lead guitar and vocals, said that playing at noon was a little early.

No one in the pub on Nov. 30 would have thought this, as the band ripped through most of the songs from its self-titled debut CD on teenage USA records.

In addition to the band's own songs, The Weekend played an interesting cover that seemed to get everyone in the After Hours pub at the Niagara College Welland campus smiling.

The first notes of the Spice Girls' song *Stop* brought laughter and a lot of heads bobbing from those lucky enough to see this up-and-coming Canadian rock band.

The Weekend is Wasse, vocals and guitar, Lorien Jones, bass and vocals, Lincon Cushman, synthesizers and Ben Playford, drums.

Wasse and Jones harmonize well. Cushman's synthesizers are an interesting addition to the band's original brand of Canadian indie rock. It is this original sound that makes it impossible not to be impressed with The Weekend.

Musicianship aside, this band knows how to rock. Jones is always moving, and Cushman moves almost robotically to the music. When the band played the Spice Girls' song, Wasse and Jones did the dance moves for the last verse, getting more cheers from the crowd. Any band that can play a Spice Girls' song and not have beer bottles thrown at it is doing something right.

Andrea Wasse, from the band The Weekend, displays her talents on guitar and vocals.

Photo by Stephen D'Orazio

According to the band's homepage (www. rocktheweekend .com), Wasse and Jones have been friends since the first grade and one day decided to form a band.

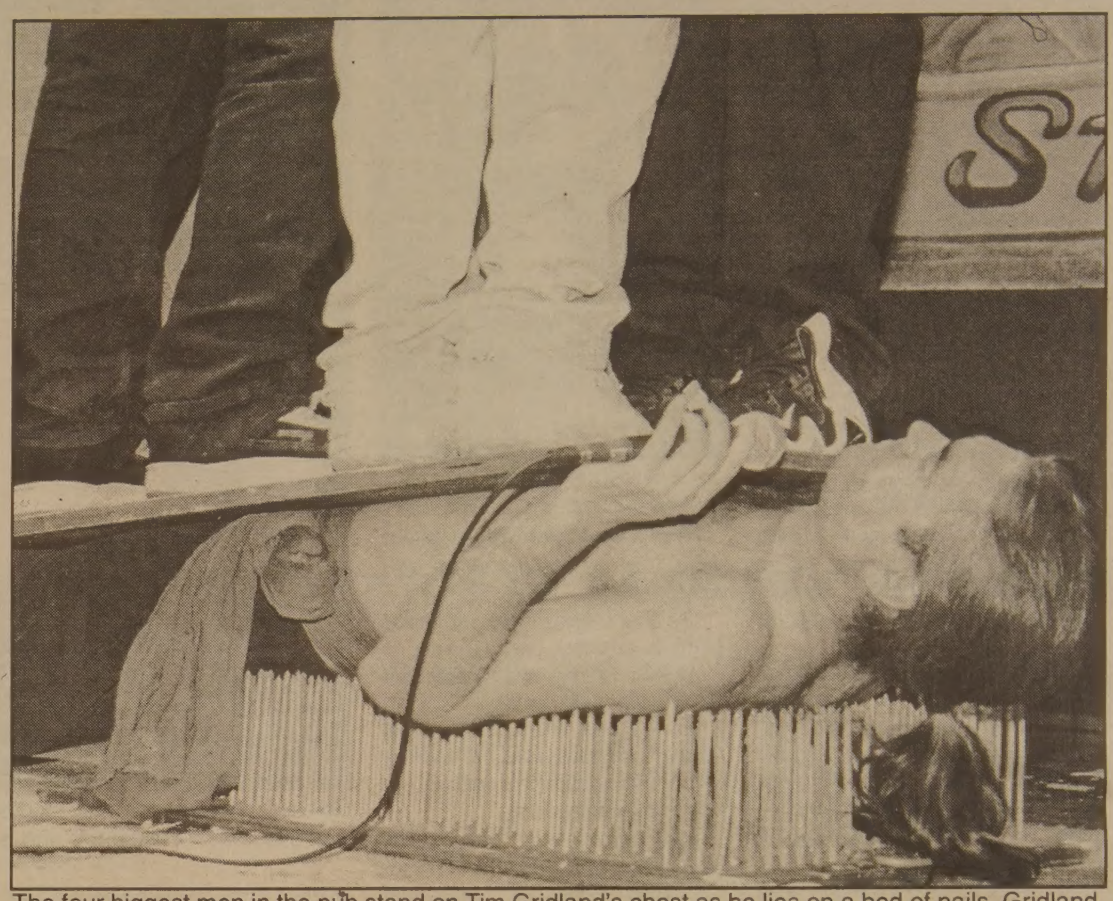
Look for The Weekend in late December in London with Sinclaire, and New Year's Eve at Lee's Palace in Toronto.

BRING THE PAIN

Sideshow shocks, entertains pub crowd

Zamora and Slymenstra join forces to execute unbelieveable stunts of fire breathing, body piercing and mind control

By BILL STEPHENSON
Staff Writer



The four biggest men in the pub stand on Tim Gridland's chest as he lies on a bed of nails. Gridland, turning 37 this month, walked away leaving no blood behind. His back was covered with multiple indentations, which he showed the crowd.

Photo by Bill Stephenson

The two of them make a unique pair.

As I watched them communicate backstage at Niagara College's After Hour's pub, their personalities seemed to contrast with each another. The phrase "opposites attract" has never been truer. However, it seems that their common interests are what brought them together to perform on Zamora's Touring Sideshow.

Zamora The Torture King, Tim Gridland, and Slymenstra Hyman, from the musical shock group GWAR, both entertain audiences using eye-catching stunts such as fire breathing.

Gridland had a calm, cool, classy and mild-mannered presence as he spoke. Dressed in black, wearing a GWAR T-shirt, boots and a leather jacket, he sat cross-legged. His long, dark hair, tied back, fell on his shoulders. Not once did he boast about his numerous sideshow stunts, which include eating a crushed light-bulb and laying on a "bed of blades" while a cinder block is smashed on his chest with a sledge hammer.

Before Slymenstra and I engaged in discussion, I observed her preparing for the show while speaking with Gridland. I had the privilege of watching her make a penis out of a balloon, which was used later in the show.

When she wasn't dolled up for her stage show, Slymenstra wore black clothing. Her hair was dyed blond, as were her eyebrows, and her dark roots could be seen underneath her thin hair.

She's taller than I am. Standing over six-feet tall, she was loud and rude and liked to poke fun at The Torture King. If she didn't have such a charming smile she'd be deathly intimidating. Using several obscenities and cackling, she was great fun to speak with. I had seen her in music videos, but observing her electricity in person was a treat.

At points she seemed almost hyperactive, getting up and then sitting down and talking at a rate so fast my pen couldn't keep up. She paced around the room, playing with different things she had brought for the show.

We talked about her various stunts. One in particular is her new "big stunt" she's been working on, she says.

"I shoot 20-foot long lightning bolts out of my fingertips," she explains. The lightning bolts are charged with two million volts of electricity. Her stunt couldn't be performed in the pub on Nov. 27 because "The stage dimensions have to be so particular." kVA Effects, a company that creates special effects for TV, film, and theatre, taught Slymenstra the stunt. A device called the Tesla coil is used to provide the electricity.

She had a female audience member hold the 'penis balloon' at crotch level, while a male audience member was on his knees imitating an act of oral sex.

She uses her own powers on stage, for example, domination. She had a female audience member hold the "penis balloon" at crotch level, while a male audience member was on his knees imitating an act of oral sex. Slymenstra likes her whips — bull whips, to be exact. While the tip of the balloon was in the male's mouth, she quickly snapped the whip and the balloon burst.

Slymenstra first came into contact with Zamora when his sideshow opened up for GWAR. He has been the only male guest on the Girly Freak Show, a female sideshow initiated by Slymenstra.

"Every queen needs her king," she says smiling. Slymenstra explains her transition from GWAR to the sideshow: "It's like a comic strip. Hyman sneaks out of the temple and runs away with the sideshow."

When on stage and in control, the vulgar Slymenstra fills the room with her devilish grin. She wears elaborate costumes aimed at attracting the male audience. "I bring a more theatric quality, a sexy edge." She parades back and forth, and sometimes screams at the climax of a stunt, or she throws cake at the crowd. At the college she sang a blues song dressed as half Slymenstra and half serpent.

At one point during the show, Zamora introduced Slymenstra as "Miss Electra." She proved she was worth her name. She conducted electricity with her body lighting a fluorescent light bulb from her mouth. Slymenstra says she was named out of "pure man hate and pussy." It was her birthday on Nov. 27. I asked her how old she was and she replied "33 degrees of total interesting." Look for her Web site, which is expected to be up in the next couple of months (Slymenstra.com). She holds a Guinness Record for spitting a 38-foot flame from her mouth.

Fire breathing is one of the techniques The Torture King has been teaching Slymenstra. "He's a great teacher," saying later, "Tim impresses me as a performer."

Gridland toured with The Jim Rose Circus Sideshow at Lollapalooza in 1992. However, Gridland and Rose had different ideas on how the show should be done.

"There was a split interest," says Gridland. "There has been a feud going on for a few years."

The Jim Rose Circus SideShow features acts such as Mexican transvestite wrestling and fat lady sumo wrestling. Zamora's show is derived from the Middle East and is much more classical in its approach. Because of these differences Zamora left Rose's show and formed his own in 1994.

Fear is never evident in his facial expression . . . He practices self-hypnosis, martial arts techniques, yoga, and other Eastern disciplines that assist his mind in controlling his body's reaction to pain.

"Anticipating pain makes pain more painful," Zamora says as he discusses his mindset on the stage. "I am a smaller part of the universe." Zamora is poised and proper on stage while making an odd lewd comment here or there. Fear is never evident in his facial expression. He always stays calm, even when piercing his biceps with bicycle spokes. He practices self-hypnosis, martial arts techniques, yoga, and other Eastern disciplines that assist his mind in controlling his body's reaction to pain.

Zamora is turning 37 years old this month. He has appeared on such TV shows as Guinness World Records: Primetime, 48 Hours, Penn and Teller's Sin City, Real TV, Maury Povich, Ripley's Believe It or Not!, The Discovery Channel, and The Learning Channel.

In California, Zamora is part of a group studying Islamic mysticism, a branch of Islamic thought. He follows a Muslim diet called Sufism. It insists he doesn't eat pork or drink alchohol. This month is the month of Ramadan, which is the period of fasting for Muslims. Zamora was fasting during the week of Nov. 27.

Off the Deep End was the name of a "fanzine" Zamora edited. "It focused on 'weird science' . . . science fiction used to be a counter-culture thing, but now blue-haired old ladies will recognize me on the street."

Gridland grew up in Pullman, Wash. From the time he was young, he says, he liked to "see strange things." He was fascinated by the sideshow culture after he read a book on East Indian sword swallowing and snake charming found in his elementary school library. "The things I found interesting, other people wouldn't pursue."

By 15, he was breathing fire. His repertoire has grown since. A trick known as "the internal floss" is my favourite.

Zamora swallows a length of twine. Takes his time to digest it with a glass of water. He introduces the scalpel and forceps to the crowd, explaining what they are about to see. Focussed, he unbuttons his shirt revealing his scarred body. He cuts into his chest with a scalpel and pulls the twine out of the incision with forceps. To demonstrate the unbelievable trick's authenticity, he hangs Christmas ornaments to dangle from the twine.

He holds the Guinness Record for being the world's most perforated man. The record was set on the Guinness World Records: Primetime TV show. Audience members witnessed Zamora pierce his chest with about 100 pins, and a sickened camera operator fainted to the floor. Another notorious stunt of Zamora's was his lying down on a bed of nails, to be run over by a Volkswagen Jetta. He explains that despite all the things an audience member might see, gross or fascinating, his motive is entertainment.

Now Zamora is working on new stunts. He says there is one stunt in particular he hopes to perform at The Burning Man Festival. He would be placed in a cage holding a piece of meat in each hand. The cage is wrapped with cloth soaked in lamp oil and set on fire. The point of the trick would be for the meat to be cooked, but for Zamora to be unscathed.

"Everything I do has an element of fear I have to overcome," Zamora gazes ahead. "I respect that everything is dangerous."

VVVROOMMM

Former BRTF grad realizes lifelong dream

By SCOTT ROSTS
Staff Writer

It has been 40 years since his first trip to Merrittville Speedway in St. Catharines, but Erik Tomas still gets a "charge" out of watching racing.

Tomas, 47, of Fonthill, is a graduate of the Broadcasting — Radio, Television and Film (BRTF) program. He hosts Canada's only nationally syndicated motorsport magazine and open-line radio program.

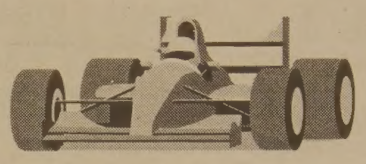
Tomas says he wanted to go into broadcasting since he was a "young kid."

"I thought it looked like a nifty thing to do."

He did announcements and sporting events during his time at Lakeport High School in St. Catharines, to prepare himself for what he wanted to do.

He can't remember the exact year, but he came to Niagara College in the "early '70s."

After his first year in the BRTF program, Tomas says he took a year off to play in a rock 'n' roll band. Ruckus played local venues and released a single on RCA. Tomas describes Ruckus as "loud, bar-style rock 'n' roll." He said Ruckus sounded close to the band Humble Pie.



Tomas returned to the college the next fall and got a job two months into his second year.

"I graduated and got a diploma because that's what college is about, getting us a job."

He started at radio station CHSC in St. Catharines. There he was an FM operator, played voice tracks and records and worked part time in the newsroom.

"I'm fortunate I could start mid-way. It wasn't bad pay. We're fortunate to live in the country's 10th largest market."

Tomas says he then moved to radio station CKTB in St. Catharines for "two or three years" to do news and sports.

It was radio station CJRN in Niagara Falls that next drew his interest for four years, where he did news, sports, and play-by-play commentary for the Ontario Hockey League team Niagara Falls Flyers.

Tomas spent 1980 to 1984 in Calgary. There he worked at radio stations doing news, sports, some disc jockeying and more hockey play-by-play comentary.

After his time in Calgary, Tomas moved back to CJRN to do the morning show.

Tomas says he did some of the show solo and some with Stu Black, Niagara College's project manager of New Media Development, who helped him anchor the program. Black says he was a college employee but freelanced as the morning show's host.

"Erik was initially brought in as a co-host with me, providing humourous sketches, sports and sports commentary. We worked together initially. Then he took over as solo host during a cost-cutting phase," says Black.

"He is super creative. He's one of the best imitators I've ever heard. He had a great range of character voices he could draw from."

Black says he hears Tomas from time to time on The FAN 590, an AM sports talk station out of Toronto.

Tomas says "after a couple years" he went to Toronto to work at 680 AM as a sports director. He spent five years there and did some play-by-play comentary for the Toronto Maple Leafs for the station and for CHCH TV (now ONtv).

Radio station Mix 99.9 in Toronto was his next stop. During this time he started to work with Promark Motorsport International Inc.

He says he produced a television show and did some anchoring.

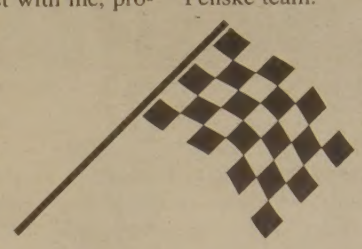
Doing a demo for Raceline Radio in 1992, it became his "major project." He is producer and hosts the show with John Massingberd.

Tomas says his first experience in racing was when he was seven years old. He, his brother and his father went to Merrittville Speedway to watch some races.

"I was hooked immediately. I still get almost as much charge now was I did then. I'm doing everything I ever wanted to do."

Tomas says he tried to race one summer in the "late '70s," but realized he was a "whole lot better at commentating."

Championship Auto Racing Teams (CART) is one of his favourite areas to cover, and his favourite current driver is Gil De Ferran. He says his favourite driver of all-time is Rick Mares. Mares is now a driving coach with CART's Penske team.



Another main interest is music, as he likes "to jam once in a while" and plays a bass and does vocals. He's created some music for jingles. His favourite bands are Cream and YES.

Tomas has a wife, Janice, and a daughter, Katelyn, who is 9. Janice's parents co-owned Merrittville and Ransomville (N.Y.) speedways. Tomas says this is how they met.

Besides Raceline Radio, Tomas is an executive producer of SnowTrax Radio, does radio and television voiceovers and does some freelance work in the United States.

"I believe I'm probably the first sportscaster making a living doing motorsport."

Tomas says the BRTF program gets students "primed and ready for the real world."

"The college is a good preparation tool. It gives you an idea of what to expect. It's useful in getting you into the atmosphere."

He says it was a "good experience" and "one of the best of its kind in the area."

Raceline Radio is broadcast weekly across the country. It is in its eighth season. Locally you can listen to Raceline every Monday night on 610 CKTB or The FAN 590, the flagship station of the Telemedia Radio Network.

Tips to make your winter drive a safe one

By NAUMAN FAROOQ
Staff Writer

Driving in winter can be an ordeal, and careless driving in winter can lead to a deadly ordeal. Here are some tips on keeping your car running well and on the road in winter.

Let's talk about starting the car in the morning.

Cold weather is harsh on an engine. If a car is parked in sub-zero temperatures overnight, all the fluids in the car are nearly frozen. In order for a car to be running well, all of those fluids need to be warmed up. I suggest you turn on the car and leave it idling for five minutes.

There is no point in turning the heater on as you start the car unless you own a BMW 5-series, which comes with a heat-storage capsule to trap engine heat. A stone cold engine won't be producing any hot air. You'll only be burdening the engine in its cold state, and that can lead to malfunctions.

I also recommend at the beginning of the cold season you have a regular service done on your car. Have the service station put in anti-freeze fluids. This way when you need to use your windshield washer fluid, it won't be frozen under the hood. Another piece of advice is that you should not use washer fluid to clean your windscreen because even anti-freeze fluids freeze at times. The best thing to do is just scrape off any ice and snow.

Now, let's hit the road. The number one cause for winter accidents is bad judgment when braking. You must realize that not only can the roads be slippery, but also the brakes on your car are colder and require more time to warm up to full temperature. Time equals distance in braking.

You need to practice proper braking in the snow. If your car is equipped with Anti-Lock Brakes (ABS), then you shouldn't have any problems because your car takes care of everything. However, if your car is equipped with regular brakes, then you need to pump them. Why? Pumping your brakes will reduce the chances of your front wheels locking up and thus your car won't slide.

Here's a piece of advice on ABS brakes: if you stomp on the brake pedal and the pedal vibrates, don't jump off the pedal. It's just the ABS system working, pulsing the brakes.

There is an SSS rule when it comes to ABS brakes. SSS stands for Stomp, Stay, Steer. When you detect you need to make an emergency stop, stomp the brake pedal as hard as you can. Stay on the pedal, no matter how much it pulsates, and steer around the obstruction. In either case, regular or ABS, if you are coming to a full stop, shifting your car into neutral will reduce the braking distance by a considerable distance, especially on automatic cars.

There are three layouts to car design when it comes to putting power on the road. Either you can have a front-wheel drive car, a rear-wheel drive car, or a four-wheel drive car.

The number one cause for winter accidents is bad judgment when braking.

People have the perception that a four-wheel drive car is the best and safest in winter. It can be true, but in most cases it isn't.

When people think four-wheel drive, they think of Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs), but they fail to realize that an SUV has all terrain, all-purpose tires, and these tires don't really provide optimal road grip. If I were to choose a four-wheel drive vehicle, I'd choose a sedan or wagon with four-wheel drive, like all Subaru cars, or cars like the Audi Quattros and the Volvo Cross Country. These vehicles have high performance tires and aree-quipped with four-wheel drive, which offer the best grip in bad weather.

In the snow, a rear-wheel drive car is far too happy willingly kicking its tail around. This is called oversteer.

The perfect layout for a racing car is rear-wheel drive. Such a drive balances its duties from the front to rear. The front end is responsible for turning, and the rear end is responsible for pushing you forwards. That is all very well in dry conditions, but in the wet ones, a rear-wheel drive car can be a bit of a handful.

In the snow, a rear-wheel drive car is far too happy willingly kicking its tail around. This is called oversteer.

There are two things you should do when the car kicks its tail. First, steer in the opposite direction to the turn you were making, and second, neither push the brake pedal nor accelerator pedal and let the car come to a neutral balance.

If you are a very good driver, you can have lots of fun in a rear-wheel drive car, sliding it around corners and looking as if you're on a world rally stage, but limit this activity to open spaces rather than public roads, because such behaviour can be very dangerous. The best thing to do in winter in a rear-wheel drive car is to be extra cautious and drive slowly.

A front-wheel drive car is an ideal layout for winter driving. A front-wheel drive car is only going to understeer. Understeering can be dangerous too because "understeer" literally means that when you are trying to turn, the car wants to go straight and thus pushes you wide in a corner. It can be dangerous but it is much easier to control than oversteer, and cars with ABS brakes are a cinch in snow.

Your car can have all the technical equipment, such as ABS brakes, traction control (which eliminates wheel spin on acceleration reducing the chances of your car losing control) or even electronic stability programs (which work in conjunction with ABS and traction control). You must remember, though, that technology still can not change the laws of physics and extra caution should be taken at all times, especially when roads look like a ski track.

Rear-wheel drive is the best layout for racing but not so handy when it comes to driving in the winter, as shown in the above picture.

Photo by Scott Rosts

CAMPUS NEWS

Pet care class helps students relate to their pets

By ANDREW SOVRAN
Staff Writer

Dave McMahon has taught Continuing Education's Pet Care Worker program for the past nine years.

The program is three weeks long and consists of 90 hours of class time.

McMahon says students in the program learn first aid for cats and dogs, obedience training, and bathing and grooming animals. The students also learn about product information, dog behavior, and problem solving, McMahon says. The program also deals with pet therapy, and visitation.

Students from Continuing Education's three-week Pet Care Worker program pose with their dogs at the Welland campus.

Photo by Christine Chaloner

McMahon is the proprietor of McMahon's Dog Training Academy, in Niagara Falls. "For 20 years, I've been teaching dog grooming and dog obedience training classes," says McMahon.

McMahon trains dogs for law enforcement. and is a member of the Canadian Kennel Club, as well as the Professional Dog Trainers Association of Canada.

McMahon says he was interested in animals as a child. "My parents used to breed dogs, so when I was a kid, I used to take dogs to dog-shows and obedience trials as a hobby. I was quite fortunate because my parents were into it. Kind of like children who grow up in a family that owns a restaurant or a family business.

"Later on, (I) pursued the career path and took some formal courses on how to train dogs." McMahon completed the Animal Behavior program at the University of Guelph and Cornell University. McMahon owns three dogs.

The program features eight guest speakers. Sgt. Bob Wright, of the Niagara Regional Police K-9 Unit, speaks to the class about police-dog training, says McMahon. Other speakers include veterinarians from the St. Catharines Cat Clinic and the Borderview Veterinary Hospital, in Fort Erie.

The class takes a few field trips, one of which to the Lincoln County Humane Society. "Students became more aware of the Humane Society's role in the community. Rather than just (being) a dog pound, the Humane Society is really the law enforcement for pet ownership."

"It's amazing what we actually teach the people, and the animals, in a three-week period." McMahon says the program is "all hands-on." There are 17 students in his class. McMahon says the largest class size he's taught at Niagara has been 28.

The Pet Care Worker program includes some work with birds and fish, McMahon says, but the primary focus of the program is dogs. "The curriculum is mostly relative to dogs. Even though we do cover other animals, it's pretty much 90 per cent dogs."

"Most people want to achieve personal growth and general interest. You're not specifically going to be certified to do anything when you're finished the program, keeping in mind that it is a general interest program.

"Most students simply have employment already and they just want to come here and learn how to take better care of their own animals." McMahon says most of his students enjoy the program. "I'm enjoying teaching the program. The Continuing Education staff has been really helpful to me, and that's the main thing. You need cooperation. (I've got) no complaints at all."

McMahon says people are more concerned with animal care. "I think there's a greater emphasis on it overall. There's a lot of animal-related programs on the Discovery Channel. I think the public, in general, is paying extra close attention to animals."

McMahon says he hopes his students "are able to communicate better with their dogs. I hope they'll just be able to have a better relationship with their pets."

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PACT targets crime in casino district

By AARON YZERMAN
Staff Writer

Crime doesn't pay— but reporting it does.

On Nov. 17, the Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) and members of the hospitality industry in the Niagara region launched PACT, a new crime prevention program.

The Preventing All Crime Together (PACT) program offers a monthly reward of $100 to employees of the area for helping the police with developing crime prevention ideas and investigations and stopping crimes before they occur.

"Employees make this whole industry work — they're the eyes and ears," says Const. Habib Rangi, the program's architect. "It targets the employees. It tries to make them more aware of their surroundings."

The new program is being overseen by the Casino Police Security Alliance (CPSA), which has representatives from the NRPS, Niagara Parks Police, Canadian Niagara Hotels Inc., Casino Niagara, Canada Customs, Niagara Clifton Group, Canada Immigration, Skylon Tower, Sheraton Fallsview, the City of Niagara Falls, HOCO Ltd., and the Ontario Provincial Police.

"We're asking them to be a little more aware. A lot of people have (crime prevention) ideas, but they don't know what to do with them," he says.

Niagara region employees can present their crime prevention ideas by filling out a prescribed form and submitting it by the end of the month if they want it to be considered. The monthly winner, chosen by Rangi and two other Alliance representatives, will receive a $100 award, funded by Casino Niagara and a plaque from the CPSA.

"In Canada, crime is one of the top eight concerns. We want to make sure we provide that safe environment for them (Canadians)," says Rangi. "This shows that the police are working hand in hand with the community."

For more information, contact your supervisor/manager or Rangi, NRPS Casino Unit, 905-688-4111, ext. 2273.

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College employment centre gets name change

By KANDIS THORSBY
Staff Writer

If you are a graduating or jobless student who has the time and energy for a job, Niagara College's Job Centre co-op consultants want you to know they are here for you. The Job Centre was previously called Employment Servicese. The name change was made to identify the centre's service more readily.

Janet Forfar, a graduate consultant in the centre's office at the Welland campus, says she hopes to raise the office's visibility by increasing the amount of signage and through its Web site at www.niagarac.on.ca/ces.

The Employment Services Job Centre helps graduating Niagara students find jobs in their field, and it provides co-op placements, part-time jobs and individual assistance with résumés, interviewing skills and summer employment.

Students are provided with the resources to pursue a job hunt, such as fax machines, telephones and computers. One-on-one assistance is available to help with computer use and wording for résumés.

Forfar says she hopes "the students see us (The Job Centre) as a helping organization."

"Last year over 1,000 graduate jobs came into the office," says Forfar, "and the busiest season is January to March when students need jobs. It's a steady flow of traffic to the office."

There are three offices, one at each campus, for the students' convenience. The Welland office is just past the Mr. Sub station near the doorway of the main lobby of the Simcoe building. Glendale's office is in the co-op department, office number W107, but this will be relocated on Dec. 11 to W115. The Maid of the Mist office at the Niagara Falls campus is in the Academic Office.

The office also hosts two job fairs in partnership with Brock University in St. Catharines. On March 15, 2001, Niagara College's Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake will be host. The job fairs provide students an opportunity to meet a variety of employers on a first-hand basis and gain information about the workforce. The Welland and Maid of the Mist campuses will provide students with free bussing to and from the Glendale campus for this job fair.

CAMPUS NEWS

Glendale campus unveils community art

By CALUM McNEIL
Staff Writer

Two pieces of public art commissioned for Niagara College's Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake have been unveiled.

Two years ago the college created the Art at Glendale Task Force. The objective of the group was to commission works from the Niagara region's art community for display at the campus.

A competition was set up with two art professionals and a college Art and Design Fundamentals—Graphic Design Production program student as judges.

The theme selected for the competition was the relationship with the Niagara escarpment.

The two pieces selected were Waterfalls 2000, by John Davies, and Cuesta Series-L1, by Derek Knight and Franc Petric.

Waterfalls 2000 is a painting of a waterfall that begins on the third floor of the Glendale campus and continues down to the bottom floor. Students can follow the waterfall as they use the staircase that parallel its descent.

Cuesta Series-L1 is an aluminum table with yellow tinted glass in which a transparency of an owl's wing is visible. The table has the word "strix varia" engraved in it, which is the name of the owl whose wing is displayed under the glass.

Both pieces took three months to complete and cost the college $8,000 each.

At the ceremony for the artworks, Darrell Neufeld, executive assistant to the college president, said, "I hope this will be an ongoing program."

Knight, one half of the group that created the aluminum table, said, "I think for us this project has been a proving ground," adding, "Art operates at a symbolic level and this piece will give a sense of importance for those who see themselves as guardians of nature."

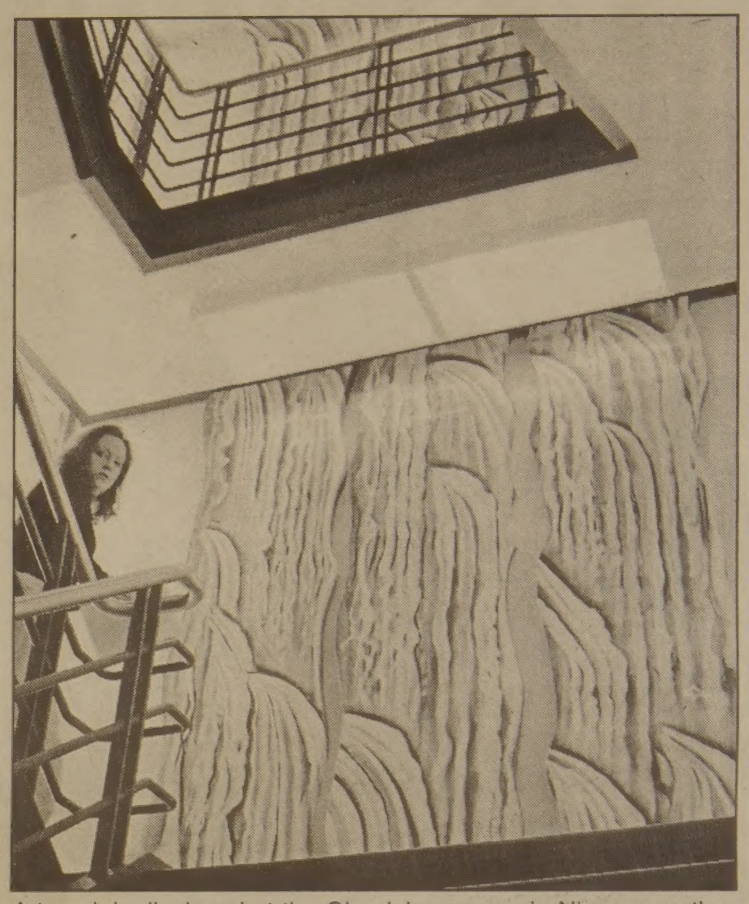
His partner, Petric, said, "There's a lot that goes on behind the scenes in conceiving and producing a work of art. This program may help bring Niagara's artistic community forward."

Davies, the Hamilton-born painter who created Waterfalls 2000, said, "It has been a wonderful opportunity to work on this project."

Davies said he wished to thank Robin Stewart, the man who owns the studio in which he worked, and Joe Favro, the man who installed the piece at the college.

Niagara College President Dan Patterson said he is "delighted the college is part of this project."

"This is tremendously inspiring art celebrating the talents of local artists," said Patterson, adding, "This will be a wonderful legacy to leave at the Glendale campus."



Art work is displayed at the Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Photo by Calum McNeil

Student faces our 20 questions

By NAUMAN FAROOQ
Staff Writer

Ian Watson, 20, from Burlington, Ont., a second-year student in Niagara College's Broadcasting—Radio, Television and Film program, will be going into the television industry. If he thought his program was tough, he had no idea what was coming his way through the *Niagara News*. Here is how he fared.

Q. Name your favourite restaurant.

A. Mother Tucker's Market Place.

Q. Name six of your favourite songs.

A. *Beautiful Day* by U2, *American Psycho* by Treble Charger, *It's My Life* by Bon Jovi, *Go Go* by B4-4, *Rolling* by Limp Bizkit, *Bye Bye Bye* by 'N Sync.

IAN WATSON

Q. What is your favourite quote or line from a song?

A. I don't really have one.

Q. What was/is your favourite children's program?

A. Boy Meets World.

Q. Who or what always makes you laugh?

A. Life, general everyday things.

Q. What was the worst job you ever had?

A. Being a landscaper. I literally never got paid.

Q. What was the bravest thing you ever did?

A. Getting in the car with Nauman. (Gee. Thanks pal.)

Q. What is your greatest achievement?

A. Curtain call 2000 at the Pearson High School. What they needed me to do was impossible with the equipment, but I did it and I was proud of that.

Q. What is the nicest thing anyone has ever done for you?

A. My communications technology teacher back in high school let me loose on the video equipment. That's where my love of television began. If it weren't for him, I wouldn't be here doing this interview.

Q. What is the most embarrassing moment of your life?

A. The time when I popped my third tire in three days. That was brutal. I had to call my dad. Thankfully not a lot of people were there.

Q. Who is your idol or hero?

A. The person I respect the most is my dad.

Q. What is your everyday car?

A. Ford Taurus wagon (silver).

Q. If you were a car, what car would you be?

A. I could be a Ford Taurus wagon. It's practical, efficient, fast and durable.

Q. What car, cost no object would you like to drive for the next 12 months?

A. Lincoln Navigator SUV.

Q. What did you want to be when you grew up?

A. I wanted to be a teacher.

Q. When did you decide to go into your current career?

A. Grade 12 (1998).

Q. What was your new year's resolution?

A. I don't make new year's resolutions. Too much work.

Q. If you could have dinner with anyone, past or present, who would it be and why?

A. Robin Williams. He would be free entertainment. I think he's a great actor.

Q. If you could go for a vacation anywhere, where would you go?

A. Trip across Canada in a van or R.V.

Q. What is the meaning of life?

A. To further the world to help others to do the same and have fun doing it.

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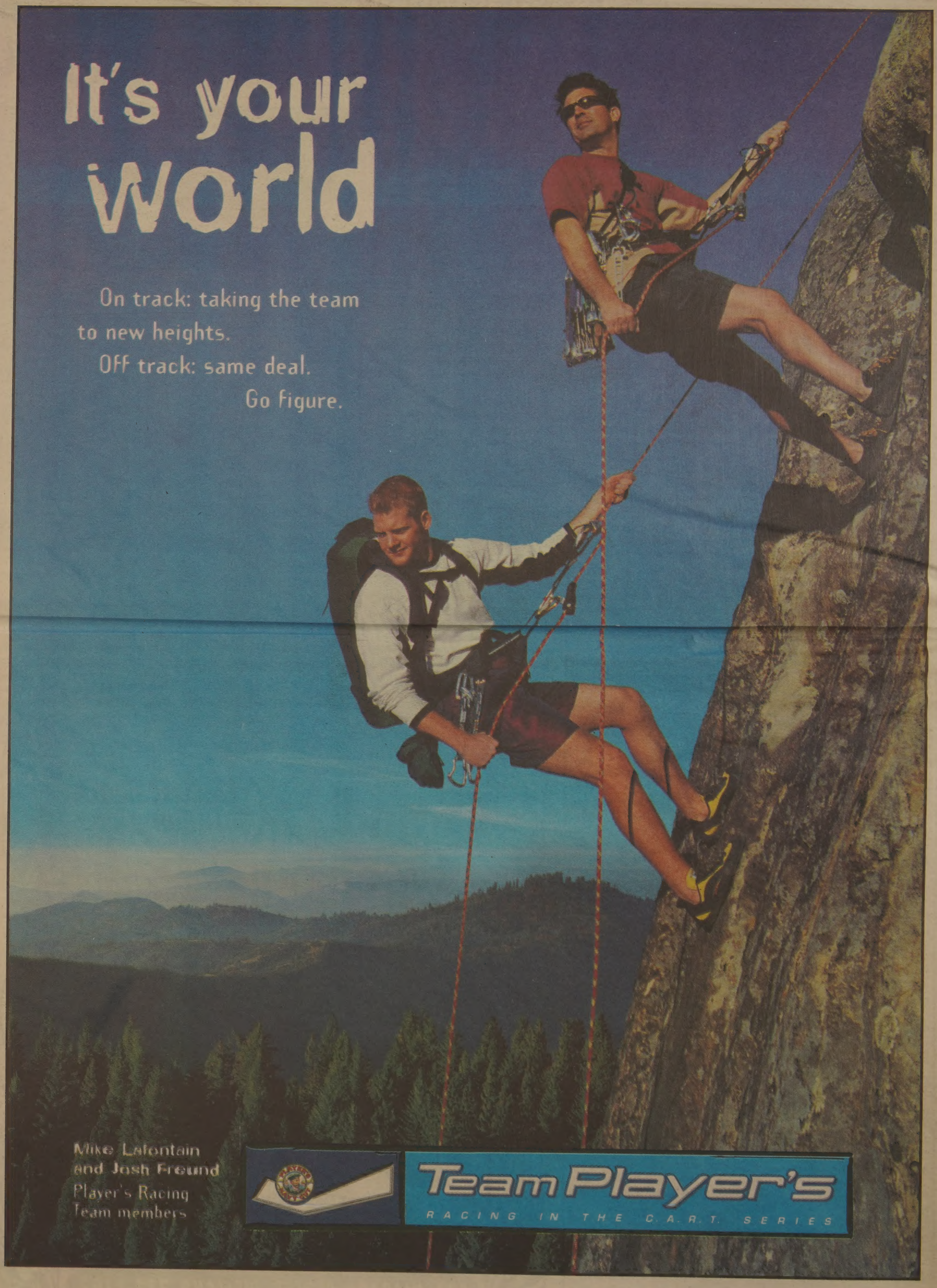
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